Class PZ3
Book B4584
Copyright No. 1

COPYRIGHT DEPOSIT.

The Twentieth Century Woman

TOWARD
THE

Reconstructive Movement

389
928

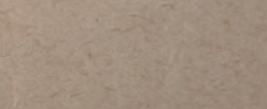
BY MRS. MATILDE J. BERRA
LOS ANGELES, CALIF.
1376 Cor. 20th and Willard Ave.

PZ3
.B458
T

LIBRARY of CONGRESS
Two Copies Received
MAY 7 1904
Copyright Entry
June 3, 1904
CLASS A XXc. No.
88525
COPY B

Copyright, 1904
BY MRS. MATILDE J. BERRA

PRESS APPEAL PUBLISHING COMPANY
GIRARD, KANSAS



MRS. MATILDE J. BERRA

The Twentieth Century Woman Toward The Reconstructive Movement.

CHAPTER I.

Again, and again, would sound through the country the important news,—as the daily press stated—that a great social event would take place in one of the large eastern cities. Nothing was to be neglected, everything would be done to attract public attention to the great fact,—that the daughter of a prominent millionaire was to marry one of the most famous aristocrats of Russia. The press announced the news with such striking effects, that it appeared an event of national importance. Every detail was given of the extraordinary display at the palatial residence of the bride's parents—who had decreed that the event should surpass anything ever conceived of in splendor and magnificence.

The auspicious day finally arrived. At the appointed hour, the exclusive set of society began to appear. One elegant equipage after another brought the precious cargos to the monumental entrance of the residence. The bride groom, attired in the conventional black dress suit, attracted many admiring glances. The lovely bride, in her beautiful boudoir, had begged her parents for the favor of a moment of silent retirement, which was readily granted.

Finally, the last one of the invited guests were ushered in, the "Man of God" was ready as the hour for the solemn ceremony was soon to strike. The friends, receiving no signs, and not daring to intrude and disturb the fair young lady, began to feel as if every second was as long as an hour. It was becoming visible to many that the mother's anxiety was getting beyond her control. The bridal procession was being formed, but, where was the beautiful, the important couple?

A vague terror seized the mother's heart, and forgetting everything, she rushed toward her daughter's room. After a vain attempt to open the door, a faint scream was heard. A mix-

ture of fear and surprise kept the assembly like spell bound. As the door was finally opened, muffled sounds of dismay reached the ears of the outsiders, and the suppressed restlessness increased as they saw the mother, supported by two attendants, looking deathly pale, and in trembling and broken tones, she murmured some apologies, and said there was to be no wedding, and in a fainting condition she was taken to her room. Some of the nearest friends followed her, while the rest, with most conflicting emotions, silently withdrew.

Not till after the family was left alone could they realize the full extent of the blow that so completely shattered their most cherished hopes. When the bride's room was opened, the elegant bridal costume was found neatly folded and placed on an ottoman. An envelope addressed to her parents was found in her dainty card receiver. "Dear parents and friends," she wrote, "It nearly breaks our hearts to bring upon you this terrible disappointment, but there are duties which, if disregarded, will bring undeserved ruin and death to millions of human beings, and this is our first offering on the altar of a doomed civilization, which cannot be prevented unless the willing hearts of those who have it in their power, come to the rescue We shall, by mutual agreement, be married in a plain, unassuming manner, becoming to a humble couple who have vowed to devote their life to help the true reformers to uplift, and reconstruct the wrongly called 'Modern Civilization.' Hoping and praying that you may perfectly understand that nothing but a strong desire to help to solve the great problems of this age has induced us to take these steps. From the depths of our hearts we beg for forgiveness. Your sincere daughter and son-in-law, Ernestine and Ivanhoe."

CHAPTER II.

In order to give the readers the chance to understand this strange occurrence, it will be necessary to become acquainted with the early family history of our personages. Mr. and Mrs. Palmey, the bride's parents, were a happy couple, who lived in a good-sized town, which, according to the opinion of far-sighted people, would develop into a large and important city. Mr. Palmey had for a number of years followed the modest vocation of a peddler. His business was not very extensive, but he managed to keep his family very comfortable, besides laying aside some money, which many superficial observers would not have suspected. John Palmey, as he was called, was always welcome, and as everybody thought, that when the traveling merchant would visit them, it would be hardly right to let him depart empty handed, so little sums of money were always ready, and his articles seemed to be just what his customers wanted. As his business increased, he would at times be from home two and sometimes three weeks, and great was the rejoicing of the little family at his return, and the mother would of course never tire of relating to papa the wonderful doings and sayings of the dear Ernestine.

One thing she always hesitated to relate to the happy listener, —and one day, looking earnestly into her husband's inquiring face, she said:

"John, I do not know whether you will laugh, or whether you will feel a sense of alarm as I did."

"Proceed, my dear," said he, "whatever it is I like to hear it."

"Very well," she said. "About two days before you returned, I was busy in the dining room, and Ernestine was entirely absorbed with her playthings, when, all of a sudden she screamed and said: 'Oh! Mamma, look!' With both hands extended in front of her, and a faraway look in her eyes,—'look,' and she screamed again, 'that poor little girl bitten by that ugly big dog! Oh, look, look, papa helping the poor little thing!' I rushed to her and strained my eyes, but of course, could see nothing. I

noticed a sort of vibration agitating her whole body. The first alarming thought that flashed through my mind was that the child was delirious, but she looked up to me smiling and said: 'Papa helped the little girl,' and then continued her play."

"How strange!" said John, "that very thing did happen, but what does it mean? It sounds mysterious, and I tell you, wife, I feel a strong aversion to anything of that sort, and I think the better course to take in this matter, is to drop it, and avoid it with all possible care."

"You speak wisely, John, and I agree with you, we will dismiss it from our minds ——."

Just at this juncture, Ernestine, running in, shouted, "Papa, a man tells you out there," and she pointed in a direction which was neither the door nor window. "He says you have forgotten something at his home."

"Yes, my dear," he said, and then checking himself, he looked apprehensively at his wife.

"Wh——," shouted the child as a quivering motion ran through her frame, and away she ran as quickly as she had come.

Husband and wife looked at each other for a while without uttering a word.

"It is more than I can understand," said John slowly. "I have forgotten something as the child said, but think of the distance, and no one except that man and myself know anything about it! Tell me, has this often happened?"

"Quite often, but never so strikingly singular."

A long pause followed, and evidently both parents were thinking very intently on the inexpressible phase appearing in the child's life.

"One good thing," said the father, with a deep sigh of relief, "it leaves her unaffected either in mind or body."

A rap at the door brought the conversation to a close. Mr. Palmey admitted the newcomer, and soon, both were discussing business propositions, which engaged their whole attention. After the stranger left, John asked his wife:

"Did you pay any particular notice to the individual who has just left?"

"No," she replied, "I was so much absorbed with my own thoughts, I paid attention to nothing else."

"It is just as well, perhaps," said he, "for I must confess, that his presence and especially some of his insinuations stirred up something in me, at which my conscience seems to rebel. You know how happy our life has been. Contentment and peace have been our white-winged guardian angels, so to speak. Our busy industrial habits have protected us against the feverish unrest which is noticeable everywhere." He glanced at his wife, who was looking at the floor, and continued. "How is it that some people seem to possess the power and influence, or whatever it may be called, which seems to act upon us as a solving, disintegrating force, and changes us so that we sometimes hardly know ourselves. Have you ever experienced anything of the kind?"

His wife had not moved, and without changing her position, she said:

"From many of your remarks during our married life, I have formed an idea in my mind, that I was a negative, a passive being, and that it was my weakness which caused me to become susceptible to the controlling and assertive will of others. What you said about our happy life is true, but whenever I come in contact with Mrs. Jenken, her conversation, her careless remarks and indifference, about the condition of other people, her skill to hold herself and her family on a high top,—people who once were no higher than we are. I tell you I am not satisfied, and find myself wishing for a different state of affairs. I envy her her fine mansion, her brilliant and cultured society. Our condition seems so obscure, and Ernestine growing up to be a —nobody!"

"Hush, wife!" said John in a repressed tone of voice. "The insinuations of the stranger were disturbing my peace. He insisted that in me was the right kind of metal to bring me out of this condition, and make of me what the world appreciates and admires, a wealthy man! The temptation was powerful, but, way up in my inner self, I found the strength to resist it, but, wife, the thoughts you have expressed, oh, they sank deep in my heart."

"Yes," continued Mrs. Palmey, "there is Mrs. Sh., how well I remember how she smothered the protests of her conscience. She was well informed as to the questionable manner with which her husband obtained that public office, but what of it! They became great society people, admired for the great energy and public

spirit of her husband; while if the true state of affairs—" the door flew open, and Ernestine came bouncing into the room, but at the sight of the perturbation so plainly apparent in her parents' countenances, she looked from one to the other. Her mother rose quickly, and taking her by the hand, said:

"Come, child, we will get the meal ready, while papa will attend to some business."

Ernestine followed her mother. Before leaving the room she glanced at her father, who, with a peculiar expression sat motionless. After the door was closed, he shook himself with an effort, and muttered to himself: "From this day, there shall be a complete change in our existence—indeed, why should I act different from the rest of the world? Why should I not improve the chances that are thrown in my way? Ah, yes! sharp dealings—sometimes—but, well business is business. I will go and see the gentleman, the agent who came to see me. No doubt, there is a golden opportunity which I in my foolishness treated with disdain, but, perhaps, it is not too late. His address, where is his address, great heavens! Only a few hours ago I spurned the idea of having any dealings with unscrupulous parties, unscrupulous, did I say, oh, what madness!"

Almost with a feverish haste he left the room. His wife called him, but all he said was: "I must attend to some very pressing business; will be back as soon as possible," and off he went.

Mrs. Palmey tried hard to conceal her uneasiness from the inquiring little girl. Her unceasing questionings made the mother wish again and again that her husband had not left, but only toward evening, did they hear the familiar steps. As he appeared, his wife felt a sense of apprehension. To an outsider John Palmey was the same as he had always been, but to the keen, observing eyes of the wife, his face bore the mark of a fierce resolve. He spoke little that evening, and there seemed to be a painful estrangement between him and his little daughter, and when she finally fell asleep, he appeared greatly relieved.

"From this day," he said to his wife, when they were alone, "I shall plunge headlong into business, and let no opportunity escape which will make me a wealthy man, but ask no questions, you

shall be able to shine like others, and, Ernestine shall not grow up to be —a nobody!"

"John," said his wife, "you almost frighten me. Forgive my thoughtlessness, let us——"

"No. I am determined to leave nothing untried that will increase wealth at a rapid pace. I begin to feel the metal in me which will put me in a position to command respect. Mr. Sharpy is going to put me through some indispensable routines, and thinks his time will not be wasted. He is exceedingly shrewd, and—we may later on form a partnership. I have an appointment with him tomorrow morning early, and as it is getting late, I will say good night," and he went to his room.

Mrs. Palmey lingered a while, and then also retired to where Ernestine lay fast asleep. Next morning while the family were having breakfast, the young girl seemed struck with a sudden thought, and in a loud voice said:

"Papa, what are sharp dealings?"

Her father almost started from his chair, but recovering quickly, and feigning not to have heard, said something about the meal, and the great haste of being off. His wife having noticed his embarrassment, placed something before the girl and had her attention diverted from the question. Mr. Palmey hurried through with his meal, and bidding goodby to mother and child, went straight to Mr. Sharpy's house, which was quite distant.

CHAPTER III.

Mr. Sharpy was evidently waiting for him. As he arrived, he stood on the veranda of his large and fine residence, as soon as he perceived Mr. Palmey he made a sign of approval, and said, "how important a feature punctuality was, in order to succeed in any enterprise."

John said he was perfectly aware of the fact, and a strong believer in it.

"I know, I know," said Mr. Sharpy, leading the way into his large library. "I have a splendid chance for the investment of your savings. You are acquainted with the mining district of N. N. It is thickly settled, and a sort of an epidemic has broken out. The doctors call it scurvy, and how the credulous people got it into their heads that pickles are the most effective remedy, is more than I can explain. Anyway, this is the right season, and our abundant harvest will consist in buying all the pickles that can be had for a trifle, and we can reap almost 100 per cent profit, but,"—looking John squarely in the face—"What comes up now, does it not suit you?"

"Mr. Sharpy, the thought came to me that taking advantage of the poor wretches——"

"Ha, ha ha! Sentimentality still on top, eh? Scatter that nonsense to the winds, or you'll miss the mark. Still, it is not my way of forcing anyone into seeing things as I do, and you are at perfect liberty to go your way as I go mine."

He took up a book, and began to turn the leaves, while in John's breast raged a struggle for the supremacy of right over wrong, but his wife's complaints, and his promises to her, appeared like something living and exacting before his weakening conscience. With a faint smile he said:

"I suppose I must accustom myself to look at things, or business, with a more practical eye than I have done heretofore."

"Yes, or I will have to dispense with your services. If you want to succeed, no faltering ways nor half measures are to be indulged in. I entertain no doubt as to your ability, if you take

the trouble to steel yourself against what I consider an unbusinesslike consideration."

Handing him a large envelope, he said: "Here you will find every instruction in the most minute details. Follow them carefully, and then, I know the results will be favorable. The sooner you start, the better, and so the quicker we shall be ready for another transaction. I keep a constant survey on the field of opportunities, and it shall not be through any fault of mine if we miss any. As soon as you have fairly started, it is necessary that I be kept informed about all your movements, and now—this ends our interview." Accompanying him to the door he bid him good morning and returned to his library.

John, holding the envelope tightly in his hand, stepped into one of the public houses, and in an adroit and cautious manner began to make inquiries about the man who in a manner so peculiar crossed his life. In an offhand way while sipping his beverage, he obtained some information from the ready talker, the proprietor of the inn.

"You must be a stranger," he said. "Your questions show that plainly. You do not know Mr. Sharpy? It is true that for a number of years he is living a retired, or rather a peculiar life. He is entirely changed since the terrible blow—the loss of his lovely wife. Their life had been an unceasing round of gaities. Their palatial residence looked like an open court which many a petty monarch might have envied. He possesses immense wealth, but I doubt if any one knows how he lives. From the old woman, Margarete, who manages the household, no one can get any information. She, no doubt obeys strictly her master's instructions.

John thought he would content himself so as not to arouse any suspicion, and in an unconcerned way took his leave.

"A capital fellow, that Gaspar Zucchi," murmured Mr. Sharpy as he began to assort a pile of papers on his desk. "He has discovered the right kind of a man. I hardly think there is another man that will fill the bill, so to speak, as this man John Palmey. How did Gaspar get hold of him? But of course that's his business. Lucky, I am, that I have at my disposition a man of that kind. But—how often these thoughts occur to me—how have I ever become possessed with this mania, of surpassing every living being in accumulating wealth? This tendency did

not exist in me in former years,—but why touch upon the past? I find it a great satisfaction to be far above the common level, and to be pointed at as the greatest possessor of riches! And what a sweet morsel to see prominent preachers, big college lights, bow, pay homage and if need be, kiss the ground under my feet for giving them a lump of my acquisitions! Ah! here is the document—a large and valuable estate—for many years a bone of contention—sharp litigation between contending parties. This is a delicate piece, but the right way of maneuvering will bring it as easy and successfully as other such valuable bargains. This will undoubtedly demand my personal supervision, which I do not relish. It is not cowardice, but a habit I have acquired. Well, it will soon be time to meet Gaspar. I so often think that he is a capital fellow, and that I am lucky that I have at my disposition a man of that kind. I seem to feel that way, when I do not see him, but why, when in contact with him, there arouses in me an antagonistic, not to say repulsive feeling. His furtive, unsteady gaze bespeaks an evil nature, and yet, how indispensable his services!" Looking at his timepiece, "Ah, I shall reach there just in time."

Breaking his long soliloquy, he called to the housekeeper through a speaking tube, gave a few orders, and hurriedly left the house.

John's curiosity to know the contents of the envelope increased as he got nearer and nearer home. Several times he was on the verge to look for a secluded place and acquaint himself at once with the role he was to play, but he felt distrustful and grew anxious to be in his private and familiar room. It was quite late when he reached home. His wife and child had retired, and as noiselessly as he could, he made his way to his room. In a feverish haste he prepared everything, and finally sat in his accustomed place, opened the envelope, and found in a firm, bold handwriting, every detail as to places of operations, etc., and several letters of introduction. After having considered the whole matter carefully, he felt at ease, and retired for the night.

At an unusually early hour in the morning, Mrs. Palmey heard her husband astir and hurriedly dressed herself and stepped lightly to where he was. She saw him making preparations for the morning meal. She stood a while watching him,—the poor

man's face looked so troubled—then coming forward, she said: "John, how unusual!"

"Yes, wife, quite so. I did not wish to disturb you. But I shall be absent for quite a while," and, without another word, he returned to his room, and in his usual methodical way, soon had everything in readiness. Coming back he found his wife had taken extra pains in preparing his favorite morsels, and soon they were seated tete-a-tete eating their early meal; he at times trying to be cheerful, while the sudden change that was going on seemed to prevent his wife from collecting her wits.

"If you were not in such a great hurry, John," she said, "I would think it very queer you have not been to see, nor have you inquired, about Ernestine——."

"Well," he stammered, "how is she—has she had any more of those peculiar——?"

"No—and yes," his wife began, "yester——."

"Well, you will tell it to me next time. I must really go. It is quite a journey to the mining district. This business must be started. You know an epidemic may take a sudden change, and then this scheme would be a complete failure——."

"Scheme," said his wife, "that is the word that seems to haunt the mind of our little girl—papa and scheme."

"Well, dear, I must be off—goodby," and picking up his traveling things, he almost ran out of the house.

"How dreamlike this all appears," whispered Mrs. Palmey. "May it not be all wrong?"

"Mamma," came a voice from Ernestine's room, "where is papa?"

Reluctantly she directed her steps toward her, and began to say that papa had been called away on some very pressing business, and when she reached the room, she found the girl had gone to sleep again, which relieved her very much. Being too early to begin the household duties, she laid down again, but she was restless and awake till the usual rising hour. She arose and went through her work, tried hard to overcome the restless condition, but did not succeed.

One of her neighbors came to her for a chat. "What was Mr. Palmey going to do?" was one of the many questions.

"Quite a number of the neighbors are wondering, but had no chance to speak to him."

Mrs. Palmey felt quite embarrassed, but recovering, told her that John had made up his mind to change his business, and they had well founded hopes to better their condition.

The neighbor's mouth was wide open with surprise. She tried to obtain more information, but Mrs. Palmey's caution was aroused, and her short answers were taken by her friend as a hint, and soon she was left alone.

The next day she and Ernestine went out for a walk, when there appeared in the distance Mrs. Jenken's carriage. At it drew near, Mrs. Palmey was surprised, noticing the cheerful and friendly manner with which Mrs. Jenken greeted her.

"Why, my dear," she said with a sweet smile, "I have heard of your husband's good luck, and I would not be surprised if it was through your infusing into him some woman's energy that he got out of his old rut. It was what I had to do with mine. Come, take a seat right here. I am in no hurry. You know I always had a liking for you. I always had a desire to have you for an intimate friend, but, you know, the ways of the world—and now that everything will change, and I know Mr. Palmey will succeed—you will be fit to take place among the higher classes, and I tell you one of the most important ways to get into the best society, is to join one of the fashionable churches. And this smart girl of yours, you must remove her from the common school. We have some fine private schools for the children of the better classes. Only the other day if you have seen it, it was advertised that a school for the children of refined and aristocratic parents would be opened. An institution which bears the pretty title of 'Casa de Rosas.' But, excuse me, I am so delighted, that I forget, I am doing all the talking. Come and see me, or I might just as well drive you home."

Mrs. Palmey seemed to be dazzled. What she said was meaningless and entirely out of joint, so Mrs. Jenken had everything in her own way, and as they were nearing Mrs. Palmey's house, her friend said: "Now, let me also tell you, as soon as your husband is fairly established in business, you must move out of this neighborhood into a more respectable one. You cannot live among the common people and expect to be received among the better classes. Now goodby dear."

Slowly, and as one completely hypnotised, Mrs. Palmey entered her house. Ernestine's voice seemed to finally bring her to herself.

"Oh, how abominable!" she cried out. "What an idiot the presence of that woman makes of me! Would not any reasonable woman tell her in plain language how despicable her ideas are? I almost dread her presence, but what can I do?"

A few days later Mrs. Palmey was busy in her yard, when a slip of paper was thrown in. She picked it up and read an advertisement of a lecture to be given, the subject being: "One of the most wonderful discoveries of the age—the discovery of the sixth sense in mankind!" The invitation to the public was very pressing, and Mrs. Palmey having considerable leisure, made up her mind to attend it. The lecture was quite long, and the lecturer used terms that were unfamiliar to her, but nevertheless a vague feeling came over her, that, perhaps, on that basis could be explained Ernestine's peculiar, or rather, natural gift.

Her husband's long absence began to cause her much uneasiness. Over two months since he left, and only meager news had reached her. As the time went on, she grew more restless. One day, as she and her daughter were sitting in the family room, an uncontrollable desire seized her, to test Ernestine's power to see—as the lecturer claimed it was possible—independently of the outer senses.

In an abrupt manner she asked: "Tell me, dear, where is papa?"

The young girl looked at her, surprised, and said: "Mamma, I thought you knew. He is attending to some business, he will soon be home now, but—oh, mamma! that is not good business. Papa is making a good lot of money, but it makes some people awful angry. They swear and threaten, because people need the goods, they are poor and sick. Papa pays little for some goods and asks too much for them."

"Well, now dear, you surely do not know if it is so—papa being so far away,"—but she said no more and left the room.

Next day was to be a school picnic, and early in the morning they were up. Ernestine, who dearly loved to be outdoors, spoke cheerfully of what they would do the whole day in the cool and lovely grove, where the day was to be spent. Happy and smiling she went off at the appointed hour. For some time her mother

had been pondering how she would dispose of the long day before her, when she heard the gate door open, and looking out, there stood her husband. The surprise was so great, that for a moment she could not move. He walked in, and affectionately embraced her. It took quite a while, before the eager questionings of the wife, gave her husband a chance to answer coherently. Finally he informed her how he had "succeeded beyond his highest expectations. I have to start immediately into another enterprise, and if the profits in the first were good, I am promised that the next is to surpass it. I met the school children on their way to a picnic. Ernestine waved her hand to me, she looked so radiant with happiness, the dear child looks real well. By the way, tell me, how has she felt during my absence?"

"Very well, but—shall I tell you?"

"Yes, do."

"She does not like your business, she calls it bad—heartless."

"Does she?" he inquired with a startled look. "Do you know, wife, I feel like a culprit in her presence. I underwent a terrible struggle. I kept repeating to myself that it was—business—but it would not give my conscience peace. Again and again the struggle became fiercer, and one afternoon when we had to stop a few hours at a station in a small town, the protests of my conscience were so unbearable that I could not sit still. I strolled through the town, and passing by a second hand store—everything was to be found there. In looking carelessly over the goods, a much worn out book attracted my attention. It bore the title 'Self-Made Man.' I do not know the reason why, but I felt, that I must own that book. The price was low and I bought it with much eagerness. I started to read it on my way to the station, and read it all the time I was on the train, and when I was through reading it, the sentimental promptings—as Mr. Sharpy calls them—had vanished. What fascinating reading, how those men covered themselves with glory—and some, who, when they started, were in more humble callings than I was engaged in when I took this new step. And—think of the startling coincidence—one of the big men, our most prominent man—Senator Ph., made the first start toward amassing a fortune in the same line, as the one offered to me by Mr. Sharpy, and in the book it is described as a fortune founded on industry

and activity; how he acquired honor and distinction, by grasping opportunities as they arose. One of them consisted in buying pickles for one dollar a gallon and selling them for ten! Now, if the coming across that book was not —well—I hardly dare say 'Providence,' I experienced in carrying on my business, especially with the poor and sick people, that it was something extraordinary in uplifting my sinking courage. I shall treasure that book, I assure you. The only drawback is Ernestine's innocent opposition. She is only a child of course."

"I have not told you," said Mrs. Palmey, "of the interesting meeting I had with Mrs. Jenken. That woman's ideas are of the most selfish kind. You know that we grew up together and she always affected a strong kind of friendship toward me, but since her husband has swung into prominence, she had apparently forgotten me, but as soon as it reached her ears that you were engaged in a sort of business which will improve our conditions——."

"But," inquired John, "how did it reach her ears?"

"Why, in a very natural way. Soon after you left, Mrs. Hamlin came to see me. She was very inquisitive about your doings. I did not give her much information, but she spoke as if the neighbors and other people knew it, and the next day in going out for a walk, we met Mrs. Jenken, who was out for a drive, and nothing would do, but I must take a seat in her carriage. She is entirely changed toward me, and I cannot repeat all the instructions she gave me, of what we must do as soon as you are well started in the new business. We must join a fashionable church, we must leave this common neighborhood, and take our daughter out of the common school."

"Ah! just wait an instant," exclaimed John. "This is a timely suggestion—but, of course, how can I, for a moment, indulge in such a thought? I would be cruel to demand of you such a sacrifice."

"Explain your ideas," said Mrs. Palmey, eagerly.

"The idea that struck me," said John, "was to place Ernestine in a boarding school, and then arose the thought, how could I ask you to part with her?"

"John, I have been laboring with those thoughts ever since Mrs. Jenken mentioned that matter. The task of parting with the child will be a severe one; parting with her, after our lives

have been so closely knit together for fourteen years, will demand perhaps a firmer resolution than I can muster. But I have repeatedly put to myself the question: Is the temporary parting, and my unreasonable feelings to stand in the way, and deprive him from acquiring wealth and its concomitant, social distinction and admiration?"

"The sensible view you take, my dear, infuses into me new strength. A while ago you spoke with a tinge of sarcasm, that Mrs. Jenken took the credit of her husband having swung into prominence through her insinuations. I am willing to grant her the credit, and I begin to feel, that women have a way of leading men to do whatever they wish; some use one stratagem, others use another, but it is nevertheless their way into which men fall. I saw not long ago a description of how, about half a dozen men, who had never dreamed of aspiring to the high public offices of the United States until their ambitious sweethearts put the temptation into their minds, and under no other consideration should the lovers think of obtaining their hands and hearts!"

"But we are wandering from our main subject. So you have been considering the plan of putting the child into a private school. Considering the change in our condition and environments, I think it a wise plan, and I also believe it will be a very wise plan if you take the pains to cultivate Mrs. Jenken's friendship. She has for a number of years been among the best social set."

"Yes," replied his wife, "and by being more in her company, I may overcome the sense of inferiority which seems to possess me when she condescends to speak to me. Perhaps if I can lift myself into the idea that soon I may be her equal in worldly possessions, then that trying and uncomfortable something will leave me."

"I feel sure that you will succeed, because I know what my feelings were when I first came face to face with that rich man, Mr. Sharpy. How insignificant and humble I appeared in my own sight. Now, having succeeded so well in my first enterprise, I strongly feel my importance, and I can hold my head as high as anybody. I will leave this matter entirely in your hands, and with the assistance of your friend it will be arranged satisfactorily."

"Now, a few words in regard to Mr. Sharpy. When I reported to him the results of my trip, he showed signs of much approval. He complimented my sagacity and congratulated himself on his unerring judgment. My judgment may not be as keen as his, but, if I were in his place, I would not trust his head man as implicitly as he does. That man fills me with distrust. Duplicity and a cunning disposition are marked so plain on his ugly countenance, that I am glad that my business relation does not bring me in contact with him. The next undertaking will put me in the position of playing an important part and if we succeed, Mr. Sharpy gave me to understand that my path to fortune will not be a slow and trying one, but I will get there by jumps and leaps. Now, then, let us study this situation carefully. You can make your choice, or consult with Mrs. Jenken in regard to the most attractive church——."

"Oh! I cannot do that!" with an emphatic gesture of disapproval, exclaimed his wife.

"How could I? My plain and unstylish garments, oh, no! I could never think of going—unless——."

"Well, yes, my dear, unless you could appear as elegant as anybody else, and you shall! Have you forgotten that I did not return empty handed?"

"No, I have not, but I thought you needed the money."

"Just so, but I shall leave you a neat little sum, and you shall dispose of it to suit yourself."

"John!" said his wife, visibly moved, "it is good and thoughtful of you, and I will put it to the best use."

"I will now take a stroll down town, and be home for lunch."

Taking his hat, he went. Mrs. Palmey felt in very good humor, and carefully prepared her husband's favorite dishes. At the lunch hour her husband appeared, his arms full of the delicacies of the season, the sight of which made her eyes sparkle with joy.

"No wonder," she said, "that everybody craves for money! No wonder, when we experience what money will do for us, and what we are deprived of without it."

"Business is getting ready, quicker than I looked for," said Mr. Palmey. "Here is a note calling me to Mr. Sharpy, sooner than

I expected. Within a couple of hours I must be off again, and as it appears to me, I may not return soon."

When Ernestine returned and heard that her papa had been called away again, she showed great disappointment. Her mother, after she succeeded in calming her, began to tell her of the good news, the many good things, among which was the one that she would be taken to a private school, and how would she like to go to Mme. N.'s boarding school? Did she remember the beautiful building? The lovely grounds, the winding walks and the sparkling fountains? Yes, she remembered it well. They had attended a fair in that town about two years ago, and the thought of the charming place called a happy smile into the young face, and dispelled the shadow of disappointment. Mamma made an attractive picture of the new school, and what nice acquaintances she would have a chance to make. Ernestine listened very attentively, and finally said:

"Mamma, I like all my schoolmates, they are all very good."

"Yes, of course, I know," replied her mother. "We won't thing of that any more, when papa gets through with his work, he will assist me in this matter."

The time passed much faster now, than it formerly did. Mrs. Palmey was a great deal in Mrs. Jenkens' company, who never grew weary of planning for her. It seemed to act as a stimulus to the rich lady, who often found the time long and dreary. The change that came over the Palmey family, caused considerable comment, and much unfriendly gossip in their neighborhood, so much so that Mrs. Palmey was getting very impatient, and anxious to move to other quarters. Month after month passed, and at long intervals she would hear from her husband cheerful news. One afternoon toward the middle of the month of August, Mrs. Palmey and her daughter were busy examining some books, when they heard a vehicle stop at the gate, and at the same time the voice of Mr. Palmey. They ran to the door and with great delight and surprise they beheld a splendid horse, and a handsome carriage. He noticed their delight, and after hearty greetings, proposed to take them out for a ride, which was no sooner said than done. It was a calm and balmy afternoon, and the unexpected treat, filled the hearts of the mother and daughter with great pleasure.

The reunion of the little family, was a happy one, and Ernes--

tine's whole attention seemed to be absorbed in the new acquisition of the horse and carriage. Mr. Palmey and his wife held a long conference, the wife learned that her husband's enterprise had succeeded in every detail, and if it suited her, they would begin next day to look for some suitable location.

"It will not be any too soon," said Mrs. Palmey. "I am really getting impatient. The people are so importune and inquisitive. I would not regret to move away tomorrow, and everything seems to be turning just the right way. We have everything ready to send our daughter to the private school, and she is willing to go."

The first thing next day, Mr. and Mrs. Palmey drove to the residence of Mrs. Jenken, but the lady had already started for a morning drive, so they drove around and inspected the best localities and consulted with some of the agents. From that source they gained the necessary information and got possession of what suited them.

"I feel." said Mrs. Palmey, " that I shall not be ashamed to receive the calls of the best families."

" I am glad," said her husband, "and I wish I had more time to assist you, but I may be called away again when I least expect it. A man with a sharper eye for business I do not believe exists than Mr. Sharpy, although, the common belief of those who know him better than I do, say, that the real motor behind him, is that ugly grimaced fellow, Gaspar Zucchi. It is unaccountable, at least to me, how two men so extremely unlike, can act in such close business relations. Mr. Sharpy seems fitted for a better vocation than that of hoarding money, and he acknowledges it himself. Had it not been for the loss of his beloved wife, there is —woman again!"

"Well, John be careful or you will become too one sided. But to return to Mr. Sharpy. Did I hear you say that he is engaged in large mining speculations? There is where Mr. Jenken acquired a large share of his wealth, his wife tells me."

"Yes, just now an individual with capital reaps a magnificent harvest in the mining field, and there is where Mr. Sharpy and Gaspar Zucchi are centering great attention."

Shortly after they returned home, they saw a stranger looking in through the gate, and enquiring in a loud voice, "Is this

the place where Mr. Palmey lives?" "Yes," replied Mr. Palmey, "come in."

"Mr. Palmey," said the stranger, "you are to come with me within an hour—some pressing business for you to attend—this is for you," handing him a letter.

"Alright," said John.

"I will look for you at the corner of Cheney and 15th street," said the stranger. "Goodby," and hurriedly he left.

"You see, my dear wife, when one is in business, one must be ready at short notice, but that need not trouble us a bit. You are equal for the emergency. Whatever you do during my absence will be approved. The future looks so promising and bright, almost too much so, to appear real." Bidding his wife and daughter goodby, he went to meet the stranger.

"Not the slightest idea when papa will come back," said Mrs. Palmey, "and so much to look after! In a short time the school will open, and perhaps it will be best to get everything ready for you. Mrs. Jenken kindly offered to take us in her carriage, if papa needed his vehicle. She is certainly very obliging, and we must not neglect to show our appreciation."

The day arrived, and at an early hour Mrs. Jenken found her friend and daughter waiting for her. Mrs. Jenken complimented Ernestine, who looked so fresh and not a bit excited.

"What a remarkable girl," she exclaimed. "Why, anything like this, stirs my girls so, that it takes several days before they recover their natural state again. I hope, my dear, you will be good friends. They being so nervous I had them taken there a few days ago, and now, if ready, we will start."

Ernestine's exterior did not show the strong emotions of her heart. She loved her parents tenderly. She felt a deep pain in parting with everything that was so familiar. She took a very loving farewell from all her young friends. She went to the private school because her parents wished her to go, and she obeyed. When they arrived, a large number of young ladies were on the grounds watching eagerly for newcomers. Mabel and Minnie Jenken came running, and Ernestine had hardly time to alight before they took hold of her and moved lightly toward the building. The officers of the institution welcomed the party.

Mrs. Jenken, who was well acquainted with the managers, relieved Mrs. Palmey from every embarrssment, and she was very

glad to have disposed of that important affair. They were soon on their way home. Mrs. Jenken would not have been satisfied, if next day, the first thing had not been a flying visit to Mrs. Palmey, and taking many notes of the repairing needed in the new home of her friend, she took as much interest in it as if it were her own. Mrs. Palmey was suprised to see how nothing escaped her notice, and how quick she was to procure even the smallest things. When, sometimes, she preceived the perplexed look in Mrs. Palmey's countenance, she would say:

"Never mind, you will rise up to our ways, and in a short time be one of our set. It seems up hill work at first, I know. It really amuses me to see the pride with which our men style themselves—'self-made.' Do you suppose they ever give a thought concerning the efforts, the unceasing efforts of the women? It is my deep conviction, that, were it not for the stimulus operated by the women, either in one way or another, there would not be the shadow of 'self-made' men in existence. In a conversation with a wealthy man a few days ago, I heard him say, that as far as he was concerned, he did not care for a fine mansion. Plain surroundings suited him best, but that was not the case with his wife. The cunning devices too, that women put into operation. You know Mrs. Lane, well it is a trifle, but it is only to show their ways. She wanted a more costly cover for her new piano. The husband objected, but she gained her point, by having Josie tell her father how their cover was out of date; that at a reception given by a friend, she noticed an elegant cover, and it made her disgusted to think that theirs was hardly fit to use as a bureau cover, and so on; and you know, next day, there was an expensive cover on the new piano? I know of another one, who, if she cannot get what she wants, she has a way of melting her husband's heart by relating to him the most wonderful things in regard to his children, and he will be so lost in admiration and pride, that she succeeds in her game every time. Oh! I could tell you so many things to prove this fact, and if you are a little observing, you will discover how true the adage, that there is a woman at the bottom of almost everything. The putting of that large window in this room, improves it ever so much. You will have of this a very elegant home. For the rest of the week I will be quite busy, but for anything that I can do, come to me freely."

Mrs. Palmey thanked her heartily and they separated. Ernestine had been two weeks at the school, and she wrote her mother a long, loving letter. She said:

She missed her mother very much, but everybody was so good to her. She was very fond of the studies, and how much comfort she took in the lovely grounds. "There is one thing, mamma, I am not used to it, and do not like it, that is, the general conversation of my companions. There seems to be too much thought of self. My former companions had their minds filled with thoughts of usefulness, and helpfulness for others. I used to feel entertained in listening to the amount of work they had performed before coming to school—washing dishes and clothes, sweeping, and taking care of the babies, and you know. you always expected me to do something too, but here, aside from the studies, everything seems frivolous." The letter closed with many loving expressions, touching the mother's heart very tenderly.

The workmen employed for the repairing had finished their work, and Mrs. Palmey anticipated with great pleasure her husband's return. From last accounts, however, he was not to return soon, and the idea struck her not to wait any longer, and move into the new home. In a short time, she was at home in the comfortable and elegant residence. But, as there is nothing perfect on earth, she realized how much more of her time was required to keep that large house, and the idea of needing help came to her mind. In the meantime she received a letter from her husband. He extremely regretted that his anticipated home coming had to be postponed. "Something very important had turned up," he said. The prospect is golden for those who can play the games adroitly. Land, coal, and silver and gold mines, mortgages, money loaning, they seem to have a hand in everything. I am so elated finding myself in this money making element. An irresistible desire to grasp and to own, takes possession of one's being. I do not wish to be a croaker, but, although the two master minds in the extensive business concern are experts in concealing their differences before outsiders, I can feel that everything is not right between the two, and I repeat again I cannot trust Gaspar Zucchi, and I have reason to believe that he does not like me. When we meet, he gives me such a searching and defiant look. One thing is certain, to any one who has even a superficial knowledge of human nature, that while Mr.

Sharpy has plunged into this money making mania from,—maybe some unbalanced conditions of the mind—the whole of Gaspar Zucchi's countenance suggests avarice and unsrupulous avidity. How it will end. no one knows, but in spite of my efforts to expel the gloomy forebodings, I do not succeed. As soon as possible I will be home. I presume that Ernestine is at school, and if everything runs smoothly, do not wait for me, but move into the new home. It is late in the night, and tomorrow will be another busy day. Be of good cheer, bood bye—destroy this letter."

Mrs. Palmey read the letter several times. "I don't know," she said half aloud, "but John has some of Ernestine's pecularities. What makes him so suspisious of that man Zucchi? I am very much tempted to read this letter to Mrs. Jenken, but he tells me todestroy it. All right, I will do it."

Mrs. Palmey began to act very smartly. She glided easily into the way of the genteel folks of the new locality. Now that she could appear in good style, she was faithful attendant at the fine house of worship, she had her day at home, made her mornings calls, and would, when her husband came home, give receptions, and also attend the operas. She had destroyed the letter, but could not overcome the strong desire to discuss with Mrs. Jenken some points contained in it. She found her with the usual friendly smile of welcome, and very soon the conversation turned in that direction.

"Are you interested," Mrs. Jenken asked, "in business details?"

"Yes, I am," replied Mrs. Palmey.

"Well, my dear, you will have to wean yourself from it. It is not good taste to meddle in our husband's business. Make arrangements for a monthly allowance, and keep yourself free from business cares. You will soon find your time taken up entrely with something else. Now, that by your timely suggestions you got your husband in the right direction, leave him alone.

"I have good news from your daughter. She is becoming the favorite at the institution, and one thing remarkable is, she does not arouse jealously or envy among the young folks. They all love her, my daughters write. Everybody speaks of her good qualities, her modest unasuming manners, and yet, they say, many times she appears as superior to all the rest! You may feel gratified Mrs. Palmey." At this moment several callers were announced, and Mrs. Palmey took her leave.

It was over four months since Mr. Palmey had left his home and when he returned, he found his wife had just arrived from an excursion. He was surprised and delighted at all the changes.

"Now I see," he said, "and appreciate more and more, what that valuable thing—money—in one's possession will do. How better and happier one feels in quarters like these, than in the small and dingy place we once called our home!"

As he took an inspection tour with his wife, he would stop every little while and exclaim: "Never before, have I realized this exquisite feeling. Everything suggests taste and refinement, inside as well as outside. The clean cement walks outside, the velvety lawn, the broad and inviting verandas. I cannot understand why, as a rule, there does not exist more happiness among the inmates of the palatial residences. You have done well wife."

"I must not take all the credit, my dear husband. Mrs. Jenken's untiring help has greatly aided. She is the one to whom this transformation is due, and it will please her to know that it suits your taste. We will call on them tomorrow. I think you will like Mr. Jenken. He is not as talkative as his wife, but he is very cordial and agreeable."

"I shall be very glad to get acquainted with them, and now I would like to tell you, and give you many details concerning the business prospects. Perhaps you may think I better wait a while, but my mind is so full of it——."

"I will tell you what my last instruction from Mrs. Jenken is. She said it is not good for a woman of good society to be concerned about her husband's business. He must supply her with abundance of money and that is all."

"That perplexes me very much my dear. I was so glad to have you, with whom I could talk confidently upon matters, which intimately concerns us both. There is no one else to whom I can freely open my mind and heart, but if etiquette and conventionality demand this sacrifice, I suppose we must submit to it."

CHAPTER IV.

Two weeks were spent by the good man at his pleasant home when again he received a notice to go and see Mr. Sharpy. As usual he reached the place at the appointed hour. He saw the gentleman sitting in a comfortable easy chair, but he did not appear comfortable. At the noise produced by his approaching steps, with a quick motion he sprang to his feet.

"Ah! It is you John?" With a jesture indicating that he was glad he was mistaken, he took his seat again. He waived his hand motioning him to take a seat, and then fell into an attitude of inner absorbtion, apparently forgetting John's presence. Raising his head abruptly, he asked in a husky voice:

"Do you believe in presentiments?"

John started from his seat. The question was so strange and unexpected, that he had no time to formulate an answer.

"It is immaterial whether you do or not," he continued, "for a few days I have not felt like myself. Please listen carefully to what I say. I have not known you very long, but I am convinced that you are honest and upright, and I know I can trust you. I was senseless on my part, to do what I have done, but I thought that through it I would succeed in stilling the unbearable gnawing right here—pointing to his heart. It did for a while, but now, I am tired of it, tired unto death! I believe this change has been wrought by the actions of that brigand, Gaspar Zucchi. He thinks I am completely under his thumb. He has made himself so obnoxious lately, that if I could rid myself of him this instant, I would call myself fortunate. Never before has he shown his vile character. I grant that he is extremely clever, but he is a dangerous enemy."

"Will you allow me Mr. Sharpy, to ask you who is Mr. Zucchi?"

"That is a very delicate question, John, not a word has ever passed my lips since the fatal day that he proved my savior. He saved me, but appeared not in the right time to save my beloved wife. I could never speak a word, for it would awake a horrible

sensation within me." For some time he closed his eyes and remained silent. As if awakening from a disturbing dream, he said:

"In one of our travels in the mountains of Calabria, Italy, we were attacked by brigands. We had received ample warnings, but, my wife, young and high spirited, seemed possessed of a wild desire for adventure. Oh! Why is it that lately I am like one haunted with visions of that horrible tragedy!" (A shudder which shook him from head to foot, and a deep sigh, evidenced his great anguish.) "My relations with that man," he continued, "are very strained. He imagines that I have treated the pledge I gave him lightly, and I can see his thirst for revenge. That is part of their nature, they are—I mean the people of that part of the country—they are honorable and faithful, but if their suspicions are aroused, whether well founded or not, be on guard! I feel an intense desire for a change, my inclination for this kind of life grows weaker every day. It weighs upon me like a crushing burden. You have a family, ability and ambition. I wish to transfer to you part of my carefully accumulated fortune, and you can continue to increase it at will, and nothing will be in your way to become one of our most successful business men."

John was amazed at the turn things were taking, and he hesitated to open his mouth. Mr. Sharpy took out of his pocket a key, and went into the library, and returning with a bulky document, handed it to John.

"It has always been, as you are probably aware, my custom, to give my instructions in writing, and sometimes I think now, that a literary career might help to bring peace to my troubled heart. In a short time you will carry through the business I entrust to you, and no matter in what line of occupation I shall be engaged in the future, rely always upon my willingness to assist you in whatever I can."

"Mr. Sharpy," said John, with a tremor in his voice, "words fail me to express my gratitude."

"None are needed," said Mr. Sharpy. "I hope you will bring me as favorable a report in this enterprise, as you have in the past. Goodby." Rising from his seat he went back to the library. As John rose and looked at the tall figure, a peculiar sensation came over him, and a secret longing to remain as a protector to the man who had done so much for him. Slowly he took his be-

longings and went his way. Hs business engagements lasted about the time Mr. Sharpy had told him, and he felt extremely anxious to return to him. It was late in the evening when he came in sight of Mr. Sharpy's residence, and what he saw, made him take a sudden halt. It was unusually lighted. There were men on horseback. From the glare of several torches and lanterns, he noticed some uniformed men, the whole scene looked so fantastic that he felt like one nailed to the ground. "What does it mean?" he murmered to himself.

"What an ugly gash across his throat," said one man to another, as they hurriedly passed several yards from where John stood, behind some bushes. He made a powerful effort to run toward the men and enquire what had happened, but he felt as if paralyzed. The shock had affected him very seriously, and when he recovered, there were only a few groups here and there discussing the fearful event. More than once he was tempted to approach some one, but caution prevailed upon him to keep silent. He retired unobserved, and passed the night in one of the hotels. The whole night he kept awake, the burning desire to know what it all meant did not permit him to rest. The fear of arousing suspicion through his perturbed manners counseled him to wait till he could read the details in the papers. The details were not very extensive. It was stated, that late in the afternoon of the previous day a peddler had stopped at the door of Mr. Sharpy's residence, and had heard some distressing moans from the inside. He gave the alarm, the authorities were notified, and of course it took the needed time to investigate and the first living being they discovered was the old housekeeper, who, with both hands tied behind her back to one of the columns in the spacious corridor, and her mouth tightly gagged. She was quickly relieved, but for some time no information could be obtained from her, she was so completely prostrated. Next, they were going up stairs when they noticed a great disorder in a room. They went into it. It was the library. Books were scattered all round. There was not a piece of furniture that bore not the mark of a tremendous struggle. Behind a heavy, high backed chair lay the lifeless body of Mr. Sharpy, his clothes all torn, his face bruised and his throat cut from ear to ear. Finally the old housekeeper was able to speak and the information she gave was that Gaspar Zucchi had come to see Mr. Sharpy that afternoon,

and while she was busy, two strangers came into the room where she was, and ordered her not to leave the room, and they locked her in and left. She heard the angry voice of Mr. Sharpy followed by a more angry one which she recognized as that of Zucchi. The whole altercation seemed to have been brought on by the unwillingness of Mr. Sharpy to sign an agreement. The angry shouts grew more intense, and she could hear that they were fighting. Trembling for the safety of her master, through another door she came out of the room and ran down stairs. Then the two men caught her, and the cruel manner in which she was treated caused her to faint, and when she recovered everything was as silent as usual, but she dreaded the worst, and in her helpless condition tried desperately to attract somebody's attention.

"This is horrible!" said John as he finished the reading, "and now the safest course for me to take, is to leave as quietly as possible, or I may become implicated in this nefarious crime."

When he reached home, his wife felt alarmed. The terrible shock caused such a deep mark of sorrow and pain on his countenance. He thought it would be best not to tell her anything and his pretext for looking so bad, was that he had been a little overworked, but he would take the needed rest, and all would be right. He watched very close, but no vestige could be found—so the press reported—of the murderer and his accomplices. They had disappeared, and not the slightest trace of their whereabouts could be gained. Day after day John would retire into his well equipped library, examining the documents handed to him by Mr. Sharpy at their last interview. He found himself a very rich man, with a splendid prospect in the future. He could hardly resist the desire to inform his wife about it, but etiquette, of course, and so he kept everything for himself. Weeks and months passed and the mystery remained as dense as ever. After having fully recovered, he undertook the personal supervision of his extensive business. He began to be looked up to. He was sought after by the most prominent members of the chambers of commerce, manufacturers associations, etc. Mrs. Jenken felt proud, although her friends were far ahead of them in worldy possessions. She was now planning for a trip to Europe, that was all the rage now among the "upper ten." Mrs. Palmey was delighted at the

idea to visit the old continent, but she would like to have Ernestine go with them.

"So do I," said Mrs. Jenken. "I would like to have my daughters take that trip too, but think we will have to wait nearly a year, before they get through with their studies."

"Yes," replied Mrs. Palmey, "but you know how quick the time passes. Already one year since my daughter was placed in that good school, and then you know it will require considerable time to prepare ourselves for that long voyage."

"We do not need to prepare so much," said Mrs. Jenken. "We can have things made there, more stylish and nicer than here. Think of it! There are over forty million dollars spent in Europe by Americans every year! A trip to Europe is always fashionable, because it is none but the better class that can indulge in those luxuries. If you think that we can wait, I will not insist any more."

Ernestine's letters were always welcome. Her hand writing was beautiful, and the thoughts she expressed were sometimes so original, and although they conveyed deeper meanings than her parents could grasp, they were pleased that she was progressing so well, and her mother was building many a brilliant air castle concerning the future of her beautiful daughter. She was developing into a handsome young woman. She was tall and well formed. Her face would have been a study for a philosopher. The inner working of her soul would be reflected upon it with a mirror-like fidelity. It had become a habit with her, when time permitted, to retire and meditate—as she would say—commune with her inner self. It was not clear to many of the young ladies how it was possible for any human being to commune in that manner, but they had a living example before them. When she would thus retire, she was often watched, and a real transformation seemed to take place. Her countenance would asume an angelic expression, and none could approach her without feeling a powerful impulse to become better. She seemed to radiate the purest love and happiness. Everybody loved and held her in the highest esteem, and she was true to every one. She was sweet and unaffected, quite a contrast with most of the other girls, whose tempers were as mobile and changeable as they could be made by affectation, and self will, and the pinning of their girlish

happiness on externalities reaping thereby, flutter, excitment and disappointment.

Mr. Palmey was coining money. His wealth increased, and so did the people's esteem and respect toward him, but he had never forgotten his daughter's sudden question: "Papa what is the meaning of sharp dealing?" He well remembered that it had pierced his heart like a pointed arrow. His way of money getting, although sanctioned by the world, looking at it from a true standpoint, was really nothing short of "sharp dealing" or robbing the producers of wealth! He almost dreaded the day when Ernestine would return home. He heartily approved Mrs. Jenken's idea of taking a trip to Europe, as soon as the girls retired from the school. How swift the years had gone by! He had several times spoken to his wife of disposing of their pleasant home and acquire one more in keeping with their prosperous condition. His wife, after a consultation with her friend, assented very gladly, and she mentioned incidently that they had for some time been contemplating the purchase of a summer residence.

"A delightful idea!" exclaimed Mr. Palmey. "I am in a position to gratify every wish. How true the adage that money is everything! If we cannot find what will suit us, we can have it constructed."

"One thing we must not forget," said his wife, "that is, we must have ample grounds, for that is one of our daughter's greatest delights."

For a moment Mr. Palmey knit his brows but then quickly said:

"I am glad you reminded me of it."

"You have been so absorbed in your business, John, that during the nearly two years of the girl's school time, you have never taken as much as the necessary time to pay her a visit. You won't recognize her, she is developing into a superb woman. By the way, I spoke to her about our prospective trip to Europe, and you ought to see how happy she feels over it, but she says that after the trip she wants to return to school. She wants to acquire the highest grade of education, and——."

The exultation that John felt hearing the news, caused him to interrupt her, "and I am so glad," he said, "that she shows that laudable ambition, and it shall be gratified."

Continuing, his wife said: "We may make enquiries in order

to locate her in one of the most select and best seminaries for young ladies. The principal of this institution tells me that she can excell in every branch she undertakes, and her greatest fondness leans toward a thorough knowledge of history, geography, mathematics, anatomy, psychology, music, painting and sculpture."

"Uh! Uh!" exclaimed John, with both hands raised above his head, "a genius! is she!"

"I thought myself, the professor exaggerated, but he spoke so earnestly. Now, think for one moment, had we remained poor would all those talents have ever been brought to the surface."

"Very, very true," said John, "and the good Lord only knows, how much human talent is lost, simply for the lack of money!"

"Did the coachman hand to you the invitation cards? I was so busy, could not see to it myself. There is to be a great reception, and several foreign dignitaries will increase the honor of the fine gathering which is to be represented by the most elite society."

This news caused Mrs. Palmey's heart to throb with pleasure, mixed with apprehension. Would she be able to make a creditable appearance?

"My dear," said her husband, noticing her being disturbed, "there is no cause for disquieting your mind, express your wishes, and anything you need——."

"I know," she replied nervously, "but how can I know what is required at such an occasion? We have as yet never appeared before a real aristocrat. Oh! but won't that be a great honor! I felt so envious yesterday when Mrs. L. said that her brother was going to Russia and that he would be presented to the Czar. Her niece, with great pride said: 'Isn't that an honor?' I felt a little mortified for them when a lady visitor bluntly said: 'No and I cannot understand how you free Americans are not ashamed to toady to crowned tyrants, who stand in the way of every advance and human progress.' Of course, her sayings were strongly disapproved. I tell you, dear John, we may yet be more favored. We hear so much as to how wealthy Americans are shown so much favor by the European nobility, and who knows, our accomplished daughter——."

Looking at the clock she said: "It is now time to prepare and dress for dinner. Have you invited any one?"

"No, but I should not be surprised if that agreeable individual should drop in. He is on a leisure trip, and I would be glad to see him. Do you remember him?"

"Yes," replied Mrs. Palmey, "and I will go and get ready."

So the time passed on, and the closing days of the school approached. Mrs. Jenken had decreed that the day when the young ladies came should be a gala day. By mutual agreement the reception in honor of the young students was to be held at the residence of Mrs. Jenken. The happy day arrived, and with open arms they were received, the reunion was tender and touching. The two daughters were as brisk and lively as usual and Ernestine was as serene and calm as a stately fragrant flower. Her presence seemed to impart an intense but restful joy, and her father watched her with admiration and pride. After dainty refreshments, the guests were entertained in the most delightful manner.

Before retiring the matter came up for discussion: Shall the young ladies take a long rest or do they prefer to start soon for the long projected trip? The decision was unanimous not to delay. They were all in excellent health, and so the matter was settled.

The Palmey family then went home. Ernestine was led to her elegant chamber. At the threshold she stopped, looked around, and seemed disturbed by conflicting emotions.

"Do you like it dear?" her mother asked.

"It is very sumptuous——."

"If you knew the pains we have taken, child!"

Ernestine had turned slowly and facing her mother said: "My dear mother! Father's trouble of mind is too high a price for this. My senses are tempted by the appearance of so much beauty, but it does not fill the void in my heart. My former plain room, and at that time our hearts being filled with the aroma of unselfishness, trust and love——"

"I declare, I do not understand you," said her mother impatiently. "If a plain room suits you better, you will have it," and retracing her steps, she left her.

Through one of the open doors Ernestine walked to a balcony, the steps of which led into the garden. Inviting seats were scattered under the trees. She walked around and finally took a seat in a secluded nook. From that seat she had a full view of

the miniature park garden. The sun shone bright, and as she became absorbed in the contemplation of the loveliness of nature, she murmered: Years of worldly pleasures and gratifications cannot take the place of this exquisite peace and joy, which, indeed passeth all understanding. Lifting her eyes to the blue arch above, with soulfelt accent, she repeated several times:

The mysteries of nature,
Ever new mysteries to man,
Awake through correspondences
That are so deep, though plain.
But are we prompt and ready
To recognize the source,
Of such exalted ideals
That will disclose to us
The never ending glories
That lift above earth's dross?

Mrs. Palmey grew very uneasy. She dreaded what might happen between father and daughter. She may convert him, and if he should go back to the old ways! Horrible! The quicker we leave, the better, and so the day of departure arrived faster than was expected. A hasty farwell was taken from relatives and friends, and the crossing of the ocean was very pleasant. Mrs. Jenken was taking her third trip. She felt perfectly at home, and made the rest feel the same. When they landed at the old continent, they went to the great French capital. After having secured a comfortable lodging in one of the most exclusive and elegant hotels, they were to take some rest preparatory to an extensive sight-seeing in the great world renowned capital. After quite a sojourn in Paris, Ernestine surprised the party by saying that she experienced such a complete home feeling in France, that if it were possible she would like to finish her studies in some good shcool in this remarkable nation.

"That would not be a difficult thing," said Mrs. Jenken, who was always ready for any emergency. "It is, however, a known fact that under the auspices of the religious institutions the education of women has been kept at a low ebb, unless we should seek some secular institution, and I have heard of some excellent

ones. But while we are to put in our time in seeing the sights, let us keep our minds free from care."

With these few hints, they all gave themselves to a perfect relaxation until the day that was set for an excursion. Mrs. Jenken, who, in her former visits, had never had a chance to see Versailles, decided, and the rest consented to visit that city. The immense sums of capital expended by Louis XIII. and XIV. on the superb and magnificent structures, the highly elegant front of polished stone, the three great avenues, by which it was approached, the gardens filled with statues, partly antique and partly the work of new authors, everything excited their wonder.

When returning to the capital, Mrs. Jenken remembered another of the most beautiful and interesting sights, the cemetery of "Pere la Chaise." The picturesque style in which it is laid out, and the costly monuments were greatly admired. When the Louvre was visited, the magnificent coup d'oeil formed by the gallery more than a quarter of a mile long, the walls entirely covered with artistic paintings, it took Ernestine's breath. She went into ecstasy. The palace of the Luxembourg, the palais Bourbon, the rich decoraton of the ancent cathedral of Paris, Notre Dame, the brilliant points of view presented in the boule-yards, the gardens of the Tuilleries,and the enchanting spot called the Champs Elysees, Saint Cloud, Fontainbleau surrounded by an immense forest. Ernestine begged to remain much longer Her mind became filled with ideas of granduer, but Mrs. Jenken had all the plans arranged, and said:

"We must now get ready to visit Italy."

"Italy!" cried Ernestine with joy, "that wonderous land of which I have read so much! Are we going to see Rome, that ancient city, which holds enshrined as it were, all the sublimest monuments of history and antiquity? Rome containing the most perfect works in architecture, painting and sculpture?"

In time they did arrive in Italy. They were all delighted, but the sensitive girl Ernestine, felt like one transported into another world, so stupendeous and magnificent was what they beheld. In wandering through that marvelous city, she felt as did Gibbon "that the memory of those whose genius and power raised them above the rest of mankind, and of those whose slightest nod fixed the destinies of the world, were still hovering around

the 'Eternal City,'" and this time her entreaty to remain a little longer prevailed.

"Do you know where we are going next?" asked one of the other girls.

"Yes," replied Erenstine, "to Switzerland, the pastoral country."

And so they did. The contrast was great, but pleasing. The great beauty and fertility of that land! "And Zurich, oh Zurich!" exclaimed Ernestine.

The great fame it has acquired in science and literature, and this independent and liberty loving people.

"My dear mother," she said one day, "you know how famous is the Zurich University. Women from all parts of the world are admitted. I pray you mamma do not object to my becoming a student at the great University at Zurich!"

Her mother was amused. At the same time she promised that she would write to papa, and if they obtained his consent, her desire would be granted.

In due time Mr. Palmey's answer came. His expression was, that if it suited his wife that their daughter should enter a university abroad, he would raise no objection, but they should carefully ascertain, if what they proposed to do, would be the right thing. With the father's consent, the mother was only too glad, and acquiring all the necessary information, she went straight to the institution, and strictly made every necessary arrangement for the schooling as well as the board.

One of the countries, that Mrs. Jenken had on her list, which they were to visit, was Spain, but they had tarried so long in other countries that the time was very near for the school to open, and although Ernestine had a great desire to see Spain, nothing could interfere to prevent her entering the school the first day it opened. As her name was already registered, and she was to take a three year's course in all the higher branches of education, she was taken to the boarding place, and she bade goodby to mother and friends.

This step impressed her as a very important event in her life. She went to the room assigned to her. Everything in it was plain, but it was an inviting and homelike feeling she experienced. She sat near one of the windows and saw the beauties of the scenery, the mountains in the distance

and the finely cultivated hills. Calm and peace seemed to pervade the whole. A gentle rustle below the window attracted her attention, and looking down into the garden she observed the form of a young lady, who was slowly walking past her window. She held her hands clasped together and seemed so entirely absorbed in thought, as to appear unconscious of her surroundings. Ernestine watched her closely, for her whole bearing revealed an uncommon human being. Determination, strength, independence and with all, a gentle disposition, was what the girl sensed from the appearance of that stranger. She disappeared in the winding paths of the large garden.

One evening Ernestine was sitting at the same window lost in reverie, when her ears caught the sound of music on the pianoforte in the drawing room. The performer, whoever it was, was certainly a masterly player. The touch was exquisite, and the manner in which the tones blended thrilled her with a strange fascination. Mechanically she arose and walked toward the drawing room, when she saw the stranger whom she had seen in the garden. She stood like one entranced, her soul, so receptive and tender, felt as if she must float into the realm of harmony. As the sound of the last chords died away the stranger arose and turned toward a window. Her look lingered for a while upon the green hills, then her breast heaved with a long sigh, and passing her hand over her forehead, as if to gently change the current of thought, she moved toward the door. Ernestine, following a strong impulse, moved toward her, and with a voice still quivering with emotion, which the entrancing music had evoked, said:

"Pardon me miss, and allow a stranger whom the charm of your music has afforded so much genuine pleasure, to thank you."

The stranger bowed very courteously, and in a voice rich and melodious, said:

"It gratifies my heart to think how sometimes unconsciously we may gladden each other's lives, but it is my turn to thank you for the opportunity of exchanging a few words with you. I have longed to know you closer. It has reached my knowledge that you are a native from that great country—that land of freedom, the name of which thrills our souls. Unfortunately,

I cannot speak but with shame of my country! Russia might be great and happy, too, but—" her head bowed, her eyes closed and the repressed gestures spoke volumes. Recovering herself quickly, she said: "Pardon my weakness, Miss," and taking a card out of a dainty card case she handed it to Ernestine. who also followed her example— "and, now Miss," said the Russian young lady, "if you object not, we will have a little time before the call for dinner, and as it is so inviting in the garden, may we not go out?"

Ernestine could not account to herself why she was drawn so strongly toward one who was a total stranger. Her eyes were fixed on the stately form, and when their eyes met it seemed to Ernestine that her soul was revealed to her; a soul pure and candid. responsive and tender, firm and strong in purpose. Miss Olga took her gently by the hand and slowly they went into the garden. They took a seat and sat silently; in the silence their minds and hearts seemed to blend in a more perfect way than if they had spoken audibly. The sound of the dinner bell brought their attention to the material, everyday doings, and rising, they bent their steps to the dining room.

"Will you do me the favor, Miss Palmey, to sit near me at the table?"

"With the greatest pleasure," Ernestine replied.

When they were seated Miss Olga said: "From the time I heard that you came from America I was anxious to gain your friendship, and chance has favored us, so let us be thankful."

The tenderness contained in the look of the speaker was like a loving mother's caress to the sensitive girl. After dinner the two young ladies spent the evening together. Miss Olga had invited Ernestine to her room, and listened with much attention to all she said about her native country.

"It is time now," she said, "to retire," and escorting her new friend to her room, they reluctantly separated for the night.

Miss Olga, returning to her room, took the same seat she had occupied, and was soon absorbed in deep thinking. Half smiling and in a soft tone, she spoke thus:

"My dear brother, Ivanohe, who is so convinced that some people are endowed with the rare gifts of seeing beyond the veil, would certainly be pleased to know that this young American girl

can demonstrate that great fact. That is the way she impresses me. I may be mistaken, but I shall test her before I mention anything to him. I have a fine photograph of him. I will place it where she can easily see it and await results."

For some days they saw little of each other, their time being so fully occupied, and as they were pursuing different studies, their class rooms were in different directions. One evening, soon after dinner, Ernestine knocked gently at Olga's door and received from her a hearty welcome, she said:

"I have some tasks that require my attention this evening, but I felt a sense of loneliness and I knew that even a few minutes of your strengthening presence would dissipate the uncomfortable sensation. But if I appear selfish and intrude upon you, give me the slightest hint and I shall immediately withdraw."

"You sweet, dear one!" said Olga, clasping her in her arms, "I have been yearning for your dear presence, but I have been reminding myself that we are at school and anxious to make a good start, or I would have sought you long before this. I am grateful to you for the confidence you put in my poor presence, but if in reality I can add a little to your comfort, I am indeed very glad."

While they were talking they were slowly pacing the floor, and twice they passed the place where Ivanohe's picture was. As they passed by it again Ernestine stopped and gazed at it attentively, and asking permission, took it and sat at the table near the light. For several minutes she examined it, then closed her eyes, opened them and began to look into seeming vacancy, and then again at the picture. Olga's attention was closely attracted. Ernestine made a slight effort and said:

"This may amuse you, but to me it is full of mystery and awe. Do you wish me to tell you what the holding of this picture in my hand reveals to me?"

"I am all attention," eagerly answered Olga.

"The child and boyhood of this young gentleman, whom, by the way, I recognize as your brother, have been marked as very much different from that of the average boy, so much so as to attract the attention of every one who knew him. He has always demonstrated a stupendous mastery over self, and a most

tender compassion toward the weak and erring. He always showed a warm affection toward his fellow beings, and was almost worshipped in turn by every one. He always had a strong inclination to investigate, an insatiable desire for knowledge, and the realm of thoughts and ideas possessed more allurements for his vivid and active mind than all the superficial or material pleasures, and today he is a young man honored and admired. He is at the head of a great movement. What is it?" She gasped as if overpowered—"a movement which—my—mind—cannot grasp."

Olga watched her breathlessly. She saw her put the picture upon the table and then she exclaimed:

"Every word, my dear, is true! Allow me to compliment you, it is certainly one of the rare gifts with which you are endowed!"

"My mother looks at it in a different way," said Ernestine. "She does not approve it, and I often felt sorry, because it is so natural, and I do not doubt but everybody has the same endowments if they retire within themselves and listen more to the spiritual, than to the material sense, and if we do not, the words of the Master can be applied to us. You know when he said: 'This people's heart is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes they have closed; lest at any time they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and should understand with their hearts, and should be converted.' I said it is so natural, I cannot call it different. I will tell you a little experience I went through a short time ago. I was looking over the clothes that had been sent to me by the woman who does the washing. She was not present, but I saw her, saw the interior of her home and surroundings. Her appearance was one of care and worry, of struggle and unremitting toil. It affected me very much and I resolved to go to her house and see her. As I neared the place it looked familiar. I knocked at the door and there appeared the identical woman I had seen. She felt embarrassed at seeing a stranger, and so was I. The thought came to me that I had acted the part of an intruder and I had better find some excuse and retrace my steps, but her cordial manners and her politeness—by the way—I suppose you have also heard, as I did, how lady-

like the Swiss women are, even among the humblest. Well, I accepted her cordial invitation to enter her house. Everything was clean and orderly. She answered all my questions with much patience, although I knew that her time was precious. I asked her if there was something that weighed heavily upon her mind. She said: 'Yes, Miss, one of my sons met with an accident a week ago. He was accidentally shot through his limb, which threatens to leave him a cripple. and oh, Miss, think of the sad future for a poor cripple.' As she said the last words her lips quivered, and big tears rolled down her cheeks. Drying her tears she said: 'It seems so unjust that poor people, after working so hard and unceasingly, cannot afford to give their children the training that would develop their talents. I believe that if Edgar had had what he has been craving for so long, this misfortune would not have overtaken him.' "

" 'What was it he so much craved for?' I asked."

" 'I will show you,' she said, and she brought from another room a box which was full of what were intended to be musical instruments. 'You see,' she continued, 'we could not afford to buy him an instrument, and these are the attempts he has been making to extract some sounds to satisfy his musical-hungry heart.' I felt at that instant that whatever could be done for him would be a lasting benefit for him and others, and while thinking I heard the thump of crutches on the floor, and the young cripple entered the room and bowing respectfully, he took a seat, laying the crutches on the floor, folding his hands and turned his large, intelligent eyes toward me.

" 'Do you like music, Edgar?' I asked him.

" 'I love it, madame,' he replied.

" 'Would you like to devote your time to it if you were given a chance to study it?'

" 'Oh, yes! but that happiness will never be mine. We are too poor.'

"His hands clasped tighter and looking silently at his crutches, he took a handkerchief out of his pocket. Then, as if ashamed of his weakness, he turned his head to me and without lifting his moist eyes, said in a sweet, resigned voice: 'Pardon me, madame,' and taking his crutches he went out of the room. His mother looked tenderly after him, her lips whispering, 'My poor

boy!' I had my plan formulated, but would they accept it? At all hazards I would make the attempt. I told her how the poor boy's misfortune had affected me, and having the necessary means it would afford me great pleasure to assist him in acquiring a musical education. The mother's face lighted up for a moment, but quickly a sad expression followed.

"'At the first thoughts of your generous proposition, madame, my heart leaped with joy, but the afterthoughts are bitter. Having no means to return to you what you so very kindly propose to do for us, you must allow me to decline.'

"'My dear madame,' I said, 'do not act unjustly toward the child. The world may be blessed a hundredfold for what little is done for him'

"Covering her face with her hands she sobbed, and with a faltering voice said: 'Heaven alone can remunerate such a noble and generous act, be it as you have said.'

"And now I have that boy in my care. I have made every arrangement with an excellent teacher and I feel sure the young fellow will some day become a star in the musical world. While the mother of my young protege complained bitterly of the lot of the poor, the inner voice seemed to assume a stronger meaning than ever. Oh, yes! The poor are the victims of injustice! Victims of sharp dealings!"

"My friend," exclaimed Olga, rising to her feet and looking as if overpowered with amazement and surprise, "you have sounded the keynote! Your childlike and innocent heart has received the heavenly message! Victims of sharp dealings, oh yes! dealings which, to the utter shame of every human heart, have been sanctioned by state, church and society; dealings which have prevented the verification of the promise, the coming of the kingdom of heaven on earth! Dealings which have well nigh dried the fountain of Divine Love in the human breasts, and substituted distrust, hatred and cruelty in its stead! Dealings which create cunning and hypocrisy toward the unsuspecting millions and makes them unconsciously bend their necks to degrading yokes which brings them to the level of brutes. To arouse the world and bring it to see the madness of the present dealings of men with men, and induce it to rise to a higher comprehension of the sacred mission of life; the

great movement which you have perceived with your inner sight, and saw my brother at the head of it, has been organized. It is a movement of a great magnitude in which the ablest minds in the civilized world are constantly at work."

Olga had spoken in tones so earnest and impressive that Ernestine, with a solemn expression in her countenance, said:

"Oh! let us pray unceasingly that the protection of the Almighty surround the lives of the magnificent souls who conduct a movement so stupendous! A Reconstructive Movement! Am I correct?"

"Yes indeed! And with my heart and soul, I say amen!" replied Olga, "and now, dear friend, let us glance at the time piece and remembering our tasks we will unceremoniously dismiss these interesting subjects and arrange for other pleasant meetings of this kind."

"A week ago a prominent Russian resident sent me an invitation to an exclusive reception. I feel no inclination to accept. A few hours spent with you, and discussing subjects so dear to my heart, contain more genuine pleasure than all conventional artif[illegible]gatherings of that exclusive kind leave a taint which I prefe[illegible] be free from. When we allow ourselves to think that we are the very cream of society, we simply lower ourselves, in my estimation. So, now good night," and pressing her hand affectionately they parted.

CHAPTER V.

Olga did not retire. She wrote a long letter, and folding it slowly, she smiled and whispered:

"I can imagine the pleasant surprise which this letter will cause you, my dear brother. I ought to have received news from you before this, and I may hear from you tomorrow."

Replacing everything she retired. As she had expected, next day she received a letter, a book and several papers from her brother. He informed her how he was taking a tour through Denmark, and would remain long enough to obtain a clear understanding of the social, economic, political and religious conditions of the people. He had obtained this by strictly investigating in other countries; his co-workers were doing the same thing, and at the end of their tour they would compare notes. He found many favorable and encouraging indications, one of them is the general dissatisfaction with existing conditions. It is the healthy sign of nature's attempt to shake off the torpor of centuries. There is no time to waste, for the result of the awakening will, if the people are on guard, be glorious! If not, dreadfully destructive.

The letter was filled with the strongest sentiments, and Olga rejoiced at the thought of handing it to Ernestine. She knew already that these ideas were taking a deep root in the young girl's heart. They were both diligent scholars, and they would on no account neglect their duties. but when the appointed evening came, they were so glad.

After some introductory remarks, Olga placed her brother's letter in Ernestine's hand. She read it very carefully and after having finished it, she said with an impetus which was entirely new in her:

"That is exactly the career in life that I will follow. Oh, how full of noble thoughts and deeds such a life must be! How high and how good your brother's principles are! How deficiently equipped I am, though, for such a work! But I shall try and improve myself and it shall not be through any fault of mine

if I fail to acquire the necessary knowledge which will fit me for an active worker in a movement so noble and so necessary. Are women admitted?"

"Yes." said Olga, "and what is encouraging is their firm conviction that only through woman's intelligent, intuitive and unselfish assistance will this great reformation succeed."

"I can see that your brother is a deep student. No wonder that men and women who devote their lives to investigations of that kind become masters of self and are not swayed by the glittering superficialities which leave the mind arid and empty. Life, viewed and practiced from that point, is rounded out and completed, it becomes useful, happy and perfect. I think these ideas furnish me some glimpses of what the world might be if we were trained in the true direction, if our complex natures were thoroughly understood."

"Good my sweet friend! The seed is falling on good ground, and an abundant harvest will be gathered in due time. Now that your heart is aglow with these grand ideas, you will forgive me if without asking your permission I have informed my brother of the rare treasure that good fortune led into my path. He like myself, is a great admirer of your country, and our plans are, that after I get through with my studies we will take an extensive tour through America, where, we are informed, exists more than in any other country, a spirit of reform so powerful and solidly organized, that it has always strongly stimulated our highest hopes."

"I cannot understand," said Ernestine, "how it is that I never heard anything of the kind while at home. Nothing is mentioned in the letters I receive from mother. All seems to be gaiety—time is flittered away in a round of frivolities. but——no——wait ——here I have something that perhaps shows what is under the gilded surface, and maybe that is what arouses the spirit of reform. My mother writes that she had prepared a package of newspapers where the brilliant receptions, the costly decorations and the elegant costumes were reported in such a glowing style that she thought it would stimulate my ambition, for my family were included in the list, when, who should appear and object to it but that 'busy body,' Mrs. Jenken, as mamma calls her now, and she is getting tired of her. Well, you see, the excuse

for her objection was, that the papers contained an unusual number of cases of suicides, murders, several cases of actual starvation—is it not horrible?—glaring accounts of indiscreet actions on the part of couples in the upper set of society, litigations in court over the 'wills' of deceased prominent millionaires, big strikes of working people, accounts of thousands of children without the necessary food and clothing. I think it rather strange that my mother wrote to me what Mrs. Jenken said. She thought that the editors had racked up all the dirt and filth and then thrown it before the gaping public, and spoiled everything by producing such an abominable contrast. 'Your daughter,' she said, 'having such an eccentric disposition, I would send her light literature, or simply clip out what you want her to see and she may safely show to others.' I am rather surprised that my mother paid no attention, or perhaps she did not care to open the package or she may have thought that it might pass unnoticed by me."

"That may be," said Olga, "and no wonder that a great reform is going on in that land, and does it not plainly show that the duty of every true reformer is not to see only the country in which they happen to be born, and not to limit their work for the betterment of the people in what they love to call their native land? Wherever men and women have learned sufficiently to understand that humanity is a great 'Unity,' that no boundary of sea or mountains break the tie that binds the whole human family, they will be willing to obey the divine command of 'love one another' and then it will become a living force which will lead all to the realization of the grand possibilities, if the higher faculties instead of the low instincts rule our lives.

"The next time we meet I hope I shall hear again from my brother; till then, goodbye," and both retired.

While the daughter in far off Switzerland was faithfully pursuing her studies and unconsciously imbuing the principles of the Reconstructive Movement, her father's whole mind was strained and turned into the one channel, that of money-making. His great success was lauded sky-high. He was admired and flattered, which proved a potent stimulant to induce him to turn more and more thousands into his coffers. He occasionally inquired after his absent daughter, when something better seemed

to come to the surface, but it would annoy him and he would quickly dismiss it. His wife occupied a very prominent position in society. She surpassed Mrs. Jenken's expectations. Mrs. Jenken's daughters were bright and gay. Like butterflies they sipped the pleasures of life without any serious thoughts ever entering their heads. They had tried to keep up a correspondence with Ernestine, but she was too sober to suit their gay dispositions, and when they enquired after her, once in a great while, they thought they had discharged their duty.

"The absurd idea of burying herself in that mountainous nest in Switzerland and forsaking the grand opportunities for the enjoyment of a wealthy girl's life. A beautiful girl as she was, it would not be surprising if after her silly ideas were satisfied, she should return faded and repulsive and assuming, perhaps, to be received into the favored circles, which she should have ornamented with her presence in the right time." This was usually the trend of thoughts and words which Ernestine's name and occupation called forth by her friends.

One day Olga was coming down-stairs with an arm full of books on her way to the college, when she saw her friend. She motioned to her and said: "Good news; come at the appointed time as early as you can."

Two days later, and the two young friends were together. Papers, manuscripts and books were strewn around them. Ernestine sat close by Olga and began to read her brother's letter. He acknowledged the receipt of his sister's letter and congratulated her for the good fortune of having met such a good young woman.

"They are rare," he said, "the wrong environments and conditions have degenerated women, and through them the whole race. The present conditions are such that the evil tendencies in mankind are bound to predominate, and then, there will be another fearful backward step in this defective civilization."

Ernestine stopped reading for a moment and the look which always preceded the appearance of her peculiar visions was plainly to be seen in her face.

"I see a picture before me," she said, "which I would prefer not to look upon."

"It may have some purpose, dear," said Olga, softly.

"The taints of crime seem to be spreading. Its influence is deadly. There is a rush, oh, such a rush! Oh, the lack of rest and peace! Fear is a predominant factor. It acts like a corroding, disintegrating force, and it permeates the whole social structure. Fear appears in every shape and form, and in its wake follows anxiety, envy, jealousy, greed, and all the vilest passions. Oh, it is sickening. It chills one's soul with a chill of despair. Oh, God! Is there no ray of hope? Oh, it is fading away, thank heaven! Another picture appears. Exhaustion and death. Is this the terrible meaning? No! Hearken——there are signs of a convulsive reaction. Oh, the comforting scene! Among the gray and black hue of the entire surroundings, there appear flashes of light. Beings in whose countenances love and compassion radiate and flow like an irresistible uplifting power. They are using their whole energy to reach and save the apparently doomed race! This one also disappears, and there, slowly and majestically, unfolds another view. Oh, the number of altars, the solemnity which pervades the whole! The happy and contented faces of the people! Several are approaching one of the altars. Now they are standing still, a voice with a sound of tender pathos says: 'What is required of each and all who earnestly desire to see the promise fulfilled that the kingdom of heaven come upon earth, is the sincere willingness to subdue the animal nature which has so long predominatel and turned this beautiful planet into a hell!

"'The altars are a symbol to remind us not to worship a far away God, but to burn everything which obscures the divine and mighty power in our true selves, and then will God be made manifest, for man is made in the image and likeness of God! Nothing short of this can bring peace and good will!

"'Our willingness to abandon the evil ways entitle us to be counted among the rescued, and surrounded as we shall be with everything that will nourish and strengthen our good resolves, we will become able to support and assist each other. The destructive instincts which have set man against man and destroyed the world's true happiness, will find no abiding place. Invoking upon everybody's good resolves the blessings of the ever present, Infinite Intelligence, Love and Wisdom, we shall

constantly feel the power that shall lead us onward and upward!'

"Oh, the sweet, entrancing, heavenly picture! It is fading away," whispered Ernestine, and looking at her friend, she was still in the same attitude listening with rapt attention.

"I take this," Olga said, "as a good omen for those engaged in this great work, and how promising the results! I must write this to my brother. He will understand the full meaning. Nothing escapes his acute observation, and he can interpret many seeming mysteries. Now, please go on with the reading. I will go over the manuscripts which I have not had time to examine."

After Ernestine got through she folded the letter, handed it to Olga and with a tinge of good natured reproach she said:

"Your intention was very good, but you put me in an embarrassing position. The description which you gave to your brother concerning my personality must have given him an incorrect idea of your American friend. He asks for the favor of a direct correspondence with him, what do you think?"

"If he were like the ordinary young man of the world I would caution you against opening such a correspondence, but in this case nothing but good can result from it. Here is another letter which is very interesting." Ernestine took it and Olga said: "Please read it aloud, I would like to hear it again."

"I will: 'Events transpire, and strange and unexpected things may happen when least looked for. When we arrived on the train at a frontier town between France and Belgium, we stopped, strolled around town and entered a cafe. The place was large and well kept, we were taking our coffee and observing the large number of people coming and going, when two gentlemen entered and attracted our special attention. To the ordinary observer there was nothing about them to indicate that they were anything but men of the world, who would feel at home anywhere. But my companion and myself soon became aware of the subtle manner with whch they examined every one present. They selected a table not far from where we sat. After they were seated it was plain to us that their intention was to convey the idea that they were unconcerned. They took another survey and finally seemed satisfied that no one's attention was fixed on them. They also ordered coffee. At first their conver-

sation was very indistinct, as they were speaking very low. We were talking in French about irrelevant matters and the rest of those present were conversing in the same language, which fact seemed to put them more at ease, and soon they began to speak a little more audible so that we discovered that they were speaking Italian, but speaking that language rather imperfectly, we concluded they were not Italians. We began to feel interested, noticing that they were also concerned about economic and social matters, and throwing aside prudence and caution, we made up our minds to find out who they were. Rising and stepping near them, and politely bowing, we asked their pardon for intruding, at the same time addressing them in the language they were speaking. Their cold reception was not very pleasant, and only after reading our cards did they assume a more cordial attitude. But as soon as we realized our mistake we again apologized, saying that the mistaken idea that they were interested in the great cause that we also were, had induced us to overstep the bounds of etiquette. A keen, inspecting glance seemed to ask, can you give us some recognition sign? We understood and said: 'Our work is not so rigorously secret. We think, and hope, the time has passed for the necessity of precautions so very severe. We are working for the reconstruction of the social system and we are obtaining a phenomenal number of converts. 'We will return confidence for confidence,' said one of them, 'by telling you that we are engaged in a diametrically opposed line of work. We have heard a great deal in regard to the Brotherhood of Reconstruction, and you certainly must have heard about the Brotherhood of Destruction. As a warning, allow me to say that you are illuding yourselves. It is too late, no alternative is left but a total clearing of the dark and deadly incumbrances which fill the earth. We have gone through the most careful and conscientious investigation of your ideas and methods for the redress of the dreadful wrongs which threaten to plunge the human race back into the medieval conditions, but from our standpoint they appear childish, and what is worse, you are wasting an enormous amount of energy which, in consideration of the urgent necessity of concentrating forces, is simply reckless. Can you cite an instance in the history of the world when the oppressed victims could obtain even the

least recognition of their rights except through the power of destruction? Do you not see the detestable fact that for centuries and centuries a small minority has always subjugated the great majority, and with violence and arrogance as if they were made of superior clay, they have rendered the great majority of their fellow-beings helpless, usurping their natural rights, and with unheardof cruelty ever forbidden their just complaints? Has not their tyranny increased with every demand—every just demand—of the suffering people? And as a rule the great majority have been satisfied with only a small portion of what rightfully belonged to them, and that has caused them to lose sight of their power, and their enemies have succeeded in bringing them again into bondage. In this time, in this generation, our Destructive Movement is determined not to allow history to repeat itself. There is one land on this globe that in our fond hopes we regarded as the luminous star pointing the way out of darkness into light, out of bondage into freedom, but what is the news that reaches us from the land! Read only a part of the news and your eyes will be opened, and you will see that the repetition of history has already passed its incipient stages. Read the news and think of that guiding star, its capital city, to which the whole people have the right to look for simplicity, for a good example. The father of that great country, whom we all love and venerate, was satisfied with meals on toast and tea, and Martha herself toasted the bread, while the guests waited! Think of that capital city where today, according to the news, fortunes are squandered. Every year, we hear, society grows more extravagant, and some of the dinners at the capital could not be more expensive if their pepper and salt were grains of gold! Think of the wives of the people's representatives wearing ornaments, the diamonds which once belonged to Queen Isabella. Others wearing the jewels which once belonged to Cardinal Mazarin! Would not the modern extravagance sicken if not frighten the founders of the mightiest repubic on earth? Would they not blush with shame and condemn the present conditions? Would they not quickly realize that there is something radically wrong, or the natural wealth of the nation would be more equitably dstributed? Can any sngle man or woman live extravagantly except at the ex-

pense of the many? Ill paid labor bears the crushing burden, which enables the unworthy representatives of the plain and liberty-loving people to ape after the English snobbery—European aristocratic destructive costumes! Nothing is to be expected from those who have turned their backs upon the principles which their forefathers venerated and held sacred. Do not for a moment expect to move the hearts of the men and women whose sole aim in life is self-gratification. Self-gratification is the pabulum upon which oppression thrives, and it yields only after having been destroyed, root and branch. Therefore, I say, if you are really reformers, join our Destructive Movement, or you will see history repeat itself!"

"We listened and waited patiently. The speaker's face was flushed and a fierce light shone out of his dark eyes.

" 'We admire your zeal,' I said. 'The same righteous indignation and loss of faith in the possibility of human regeneration, had darkened many years of our lives, and only accidentally, or, providentially, has our course been changed. This may again seem childish to you. As long as our minds and hearts were allowed to only see and brood over what you said, and what the papers described, we felt as the Destructive workers do, that is, to become the bloody avengers of the acts so base and inhuman, but the great question arose: If the lower propensities in the great masses are aroused to the highest pitch, hatred, rage, bloodshed, devastation and ruin, what will they gain? Think for a moment what the dreadful results will be! In our long and impartial study of social economic and political science, we have reached a firm conviction that the present system is no longer fit for an age like this when wonderfully useful discoveries are made, and they ought to be used for the benefit of all the human family. The main object favored by the Reconstructive Movement is to bring the people to realize; to become fully conscious of their power, and direct them to use it wisely and right. The present state of unrest and inquiry offers an excellent opportunity to present the best ideas. It would be fatal to suggest to the people to destroy instead of to reconstruct.

" 'The spirit of investigation and study, even along the lines of religion, is very important. The occult sciences are revealing to the world the most precious sides of man's true being, and

when that knowledge is gained, the heart becomes free from worldly, empty ambitions, and in its place enters Divine love, and the higher ideals of obeying the precepts of loving and serving one another.'

"'Several times while I was speaking I noticed repressed signs of disapproval on the part of the listeners, and like a sudden eruption no longer to be restrained, the former speaker burst out:

"'Century after century have these doctrines been taught, and what do we hear from every part of the world? Do we not hear that it is growing worse and worse! The least you speak of that so-called religion, and the least you look to it for help, the sooner will the people acquire the strength to remove, to destroy the curse of capitalism! Listen to reason, and join our movement, our destructive work will be terrible, but swift, and after the clang and horror the ground will be clear and then, but not before, can the Reconstruction Movement start its work. Some one who saw it as clearly as we do has said: "Into the night of death rides the nineteenth century, and into the morning of life rides the twentieth." Think of that land toward which every oppressed being turns and tell me how the poor are treated. Read the court records where in one of the cities there were issued in one year 23,895 warrants for eviction of tenants. Read the papers and you will not be surprised if the poor are driven to the brink of despair, and no wonder the questions arise.

"'Why have the people's conditions not improved in a country blessed with such illimitable resources? Do you see where the people of that great nation are drifting? I repeat that nothing short of our methods will insure a return to sound principles. This is called a Chrstian civilization, but neither its character nor its influence is Christian.'

"'But, my dear sir,' I said, 'we agree with you in all except in the remedies you intend to apply. Seeing that the discords of humanity in their different relations are the direct result of disorder in man's relation to creation and the Creator. Sound and correct teachings will prove more powerful in destroying errors and establishing good will than wholesale destruction according to your views. We cannot expect to convert you. Your

motives, no doubt, are honest, and if we cannot agree, let us be at least friends. We hope we may meet you again.'

" 'We all arose, and after hearty handshaking we separated to continue our journey.' "

"This is a long letter," said Olga. "I would like to say something but it is late, so let us retire my dear."

Ernestine did what Olga requested. She went to rest, but for some time she could not sleep, her mind was pondering very hard as to what the outcome would be, "but, happen what will," she would repeat to herself, "as soon as I shall be mistress of my own acting I shall enter into the Reconstructive Movement. I have a strong faith in the power of good, and in spite of this dark and evil condition, better days are coming."

Nearly three weeks later Olga received another letter from her brother. He said that one of the parties he had met and with whom he had had that long conversation had made up his mind to leave no stone unturned to bring him into their reform rank because he fully realized what a great help it would be, and he sent him the enclosed lengthy but interesting epistle: "I send it to you. Let your friend read it. I know it is nothing new to you, but you know how great a trust I put in your co-operation. I shall keep you posted on everything. I have not yet been honored with a letter from your friend. Do not press her, she is one of us already. Her good and lofty nature could not lead her into another camp. Some of these ideas may seem enigmatic to your friend, having had the good fortune to be born in a free country where thought, conscience, speech and press are not muzzled."

In that "epistle" Olga read several times some of the most striking passages. They were so forceful, and to her mind so true. "If we can only succeed in removing the grasping, the paralizing hands—the invading, grinding heels of those two monsters, those relics of barbarism—the church and state—from the people, who could assign any limits to human noble advancement! Think of the value of the corporations called the Christian church in Italy. It has waxed so fat in wordly goods, while at the doors of its magnificent buildings human beings in rags and filth beg for a crust of bread! How true the assertion that a corporation, whether religious or secular, has no soul! The

enemies of the world's advancement, needed for the accomplishment of their work a powerful tool, yes, and they found it. Something had to be created upon which was to depend the very life of the human race, and that powerful tool was what? "Money." Next, a latent force had to be used through and by which the race must be kept in ignorance and thereby submissive, and that power they discovered in women! The arbitrary dogmatism by which women have been defrauded of their natural and indispensable rights by church and state, has kept and keeps the world in this low and degraded condition, which has polluted and pollutes the whole so-called civilization. Church and state have enforced the dogma of woman's inferiority, and led men to believe that they are the lords, and women nothing but tools for their comfort and their submissive slaves,—and we say—destroy such a damnable theory! Destruction is our motto! Everything that obstructs the path to human progress and happiness, we say, down with it! Every advancement in science, every improvement in literature, art, and every useful discovery in nature must be applied for the good of all. We consider it our duty first and last, to break every chain, and until that is done it is impossible to obtain the high degree of moral health and strength which alone can bless the world with the perfect social happiness. The mission of our brotherhood is to cleanse this world of poverty, misery, disease and degradation. The knotty social problems must be solved. We also hear of the bitter complaints of the free Americans against the cruel oppressions of capitalism combined into syndicates, trusts and corporations. Join our movement, my dear friend. The time is precious. Do not waste it, or sooner than you expect it your efforts will be dwarfed. Your Reconstructive work goes too slow, and if you build upon the old rotten foundation, your labor will not only be fruitless, but the enemies we both are attacking will increase their death-dealing power and the last ray of hope will disappear. It will disappear as sure as you breathe. You certainly know human nature as well as we do. You know how the masses in any country, if allowed to settle down in a state of indifference after having struggled unsuccessfully for some time, they fall into a state of inertia which has always been the reformer's despair, for what an easy prey they become to the cruel oppres-

sors! I must mention again what I have heard from the country we always held as our ideal. Limitless wealth has started a demoralizing work. Oh, my friend! do not refuse to see the visible signs of degeneracy and decadence. Give a thought to the lives of the numberless martyrs, their sacrifices on the altars of humanity. Let us not be among the reckless, ungrateful wretches whose souls cannot understand the sublime inspirations of the reformers which every country has produced! We hear of brute force pitted against justice and intelligence. We hear that capitalism has already made destroying inroads into the families of the working people, 'the only ones who do produce the wealth.' Mothers and children are taken from their homes and through want, forced into factories to overwork and be underpaid! Can you see how anything good, really good, can come out from this competitive system? We can see nothing but evil, and we are bound to destroy it! Can you not understand that when all the evils produced by this diabolical system are completely swept away a new, a perfect one will appear? When the fashionable 'Four Hundred,' who are the ones who create envy and jealousy, not because they are morally and intellectually superior, but because they live an idle life and carry on a wild chase for the acquisition of wealth; compelling their fellow beings to produce their wealth, will disappear, think what a great obstacle to human progress will be removed! Remember what the great teacher, the seer and sage, Emanuel Swedenborg, taught, 'That happiness in no case consists in being idle, for thus everyone would be desirous to possess the happiness of others for himself, and as every one would be desirous in that way, no one would possess happiness. Such a life would not be active but indolent, and in it the faculties would become torpid. Hence, without an active life, there would be no stable enjoyment, and all rest from work is only for the sake of recreation, in order to enable a return to it with greater alacrity.' So you see what we are working for is to destroy the system which creates the two extremes, the idle and the overworked classes, and under our new system everyone—men and women—not little children—will be given the best chance to choose the employment for which they are according to their talents and faculties, best and naturally

adapted. You know the terrific war that exists between employers and workers, and we know how very necessary it is to bring the women on our side, because, how often do we hear that the wealthy do not know, or else are cruelly indifferent, how the poor live, and who is most to blame? We say, women! Their hearts cannot be touched; and what makes them so hard hearted? The present system! If this were not the case could they remain indifferent when they know and hear how the toilers are too often treated like dumb animals, overtaxed, brow-beaten and overworked without consideration, and consequently manliness is cruelly beaten out of man? Our new system will make it possible by its improvements of human environments, to influence the great mass of mankind to have a deeper liking and aptitude for literary and artistic pursuits, and cultivate taste and intelligence that will make it wiser and nobler, and thereby become valuable members of the community, making life really useful and radiating true and permanent happiness all around. Yours in the struggle for a true and higher civilization.—N. N."

Olga arose, drew a long breath, and whispered: "Had my brother and I not posted ourselves and were we not standing on a firm rock, I must own that the earnest expressions of the writer are contagious. His perceptions and his diagnosis are correct beyond dispute. Their methods are the only obstacle in the way between us. Will it be wise to let Ernestine read this? May it not kindle in her a strong desire for immediate action, and upset her parents' plan? Ivanohe would like to have her read it, but if he knew how these questions impress her he would perhaps feel as I do. Ah, there is a piece of paper I had not noticed." Taking it up and unfolding it. she read: "A few comments."

"Well, I declare!" she said, "this must be as interesting if not more so, than what I have just read. My good brother maintains his promise to keep me posted on everything. I must read it, no matter how late it is."

"Dear sister: I have read copies of the paper entitled 'The Truth Seeker.' It is very radical and very incisive in its style, a kind of literature to awaken the hearts of the just and well intentioned people; a full fledged iconoclast, it bringeth into a glaring light the loathsome ulcers of the present social organ-

ism. Our new friend, whose name is Krakenlausky, is a student who has been investigating pretty deeply into all the problems of the day. Every monarchy, he states, and we know he is right, has been founded on usurpation, violence, treachery and oppression, and have always received the sanction of the church! Let every individual, he insists, read history, and then they will know that our sayings are true and not exaggerated, and that the two evil powers can only be conquered by arousing the world's conscience and intellect. Thanks, he says, to the fearless propaganda of the freethinkers, for a great stir is already to be noticed among the people. The evils that our friend depicts cannot be denied. That money is the root of all evil is a true saying. Everything is made dependent upon it. It is the evil power which creates the idle and parasitic class. The Brotherhood of Destruction will use the most violent means to free the world from it, and that is their great mistake. The principles of our movement are to enlighten the people; make them realize the Divine love which alone can dissolve the selfish ideas that money and man-made titles of superiority exalts above our fellow beings. The other tool that is used to keep the people down, which our friend says is women, shows again the depth of his researches. The 'Woman question,' as it is commonly called, is certainly a very important one and upon an intelligent understanding of it will depend, to a great extent, our Reconstruction Movement. With great interest have I been watching the development of that question in America. America is the natural soil for reforms of all kinds, but how sad that the people are now becoming too much engrossed with the ideas that money alone makes the man, and if they do not use a powerful moral check they will lose the grandest opportunities that can make that land distinguished in rearing a race far superior to any on this globe, and by their example lead other nations to shake off their yokes and follow in their footsteps. The land free and independent, the people their own law-makers and sovereigns! The American women reformers have often felt discouraged on account of man's arbitrary and unfair conduct, their unfulfilled promises; their indifference and neglect. But, in my opinion, the blame is not to be cast so much on the hostility of man as on the mistake made to reduce that universal

question to a sex or a woman's question. It is true that men in their short sightedness and bigotry were the first ones to give a movement of such importance the wrong direction. I will soon send you a book in which you will read about the unblushing intolerance and the masculine self-sufficiency; how they decreed that the accredited women delegates from America were not allowed to sit in the world's convention in London. Their ability, their unflinching support and their self-sacrifices on behalf of the enslaved black race in their native land counted as nothing in the eyes of the self-constituted, fanatic coterie of male arbiters. The delegates were women and that settled the point. The injustice and humiliation of that act left a scar so profound in the hearts of those brave reformers that on returning home a sex crusade was begun and it has maintained to this day the color given to it by men who felt safely entrenched behind the formidable bulwark of church and state. The undaunted American women carried on an unequal struggle. The principles they had chosen were good in themselves, but not of sufficient strength to stir up the dormant faculties and could reach only those whose minds had been trained in the lines of independent thinking. Tht titles of Woman's Rights, Woman Suffrage, Woman's Political Clubs, etc., had but little meaning to the mass of womankind, and often the opposition was as bitter from the women as from the men. At present public opinion is still divided, but women could carry the day if they were willing to rise en masse and make an earnest demand for the rights of which they are entitled, and until that day arrives, when women will make an intelligent demand, which will be a guarantee that they are ready and willing to assume the responsibilities which will enlarge the sphere of their usefulness and power, we cannot look for a radical amelioration of the conditions surrounding the existence of the human family, socially, politically and religiously until women rise to a higher condition, for it is 'through woman that nature writes in man's heart.' Limit the horizon of women and through an immutable law of nature you limit the horizon of men. Self sufficient men have created conditions injurious to themselves and dragged down women to share them without giving them a voice in the matter. The woman's rights movement has done much in calling up women's attention. The

Brotherhood of Destruction wants to destroy the forces that are keeping one-half of the human family as if they were irresponsible beings, and, as the champion women resentfully say, they are classed with minors, idiots and criminals. In all ages and in all countries women have been denied the rights that her brothers enjoyed and their higher faculties have been kept in a latent condition. By enlightening women they will view life from a rational standpoint and superstition will loose its grasp on them, and when they shall attain their religious, legal, social and political freedom, then may we begin to look for the glorious advent of an enlightened race filling world!

"I often feel a dreadful sense come over me when I consider how dangerous the Destructive movement is becoming, how easily they can drag the people wherever they want to through their eloquence. They continue, as they affirm, their propaganda in a victorious way in spite of any law or legal persecution. It makes one shudder to hear the description they give of the desolation and misery which brings death by hunger to the monarchial subjects of Europe. Some become insane and throw themselves into cisterns. If you could see these starving people, they cry out, you would see that nothing remained of them but skeletons, nothing but skin and bones! They have no garments, they cannot go out, the women and children are half naked! They are arousing bitter hatred toward those whom they call the conscienceless supporters of the tyrants, the church authorities, who, like the people's oppressors, live in abundance and luxury. They give every detail to the public. How, for instance, in Italy, the churches cost the people more than 150,000,000 francs a year—that there are bishops whose incomes are enormous, and priests also who live in great abundance. Is it any wonder that they so faithfully support each other at the expense of their helpless subjects? This Destructive movement is terribly in earnest. I hear that their rules are very secret and extremely binding. Their own lives they hold as of no consequence. I have been informed that a very large gathering is to be held in the near future and I am in receipt of a pressing invitation to be present. I have accepted it. You know reformers must see and hear all sides in order to become impartial and tolerant. It gave me great pleasure in hearing the kind act of your friend

in assisting that boy to obtain a musical education. It suggested an idea, which, if followed, will furnish us a powerful auxiliary. Acting upon it I have discovered a young man who was struggling hard to acquire the necessary means to finish his studies in sculpture. I have placed him now where his talents will be improved to the utmost, and he is so grateful! We shall need in our Reconstructive work, sculptors, artists, singers, musicians, literary people, orators and others to stimulate and keep alive in the souls of mankind the doctrines and ideas that will bring the elevation and redemption of humanity."

Olga finished the letter and as it was late she hurriedly retired.

CHAPTER VI.

Her first thought next day was to hunt up her friend and give her Ivanohe's writings. Ernestine took them very eagerly and she told Olga that she had written to her brother and was anxiously waiting for an answer. Olga was delighted to hear that she had decided to open a correspondence and felt sure that the benefit would be mutual.

"You will no doubt find this very interesting and the evening of our next meeting come as early as you can."

"I will—good bye."

Ernestine looked unusually happy when they met at the regular evening and when they were seated she asked Olga if she had never noticed the intelligent looking young woman, Florence, one of the chambermaids in the house. Olga replied in the affirmative, adding that she had intended to examine her more closely.

"I have attended to that," said Ernestine, "and from a discontented and unhappy damsel she has been transformed into a cheerful and independent young woman. For some time, when she happened to be in the room, I have felt that the poor girl was disheartened and sad. I became conscious that her whole trouble arose from being placed in an uncongenial situation. One day I spoke to her, how unprofitable it was to shut out the sunshine from our lives instead of shutting out the gloom and despondency. The poor girl did not understand what I meant. I came quickly to the point and told her I would assist her all I could if she felt that a literary career would bring her peace and contentment. She started and her face flushed to the roots of her hair. 'Have you seen my writings, Miss?' she anxiously enquired. 'Not your writings,' I said, 'but your strong inclination in that direction, and I feel sure you have devoted some of your time to put on paper what your collected and concentrated mind has gathered in the realm of ideas. It would please me very much to see some of those products of your pen.' The anxious look in her face gave place to a radient smile, and appa-

rently forgetting everything she ran out and soon reappeared with a good sized package in her hands. She was nervous. With trembling fingers she opened it and handed it to me. It contained a number of well written stories. I told her what I thought; that there was no doubt in my mind that she could dispose of them, and if she was willing I would make the necessary inquiries.

" 'Oh, how my heart beats. I do not dare to hope for success!' she said.

"I spoke encouraging words to her and retained two of the stories. They were written in a very original style. I felt confident that if I could interview the right party the budding author would obtain the asssitance she needed—and congratulate me—I have succeeded, and there is today a human being made happy by filling the niche which nature had intended for her. And how many unhappy beings could be made happy if they were placed where they naturally belong!"

"You are perfectly right," said Olga, "and that is one of the important principles of the Reconstructive Movement. I do not only congratulate you but I admire the spirit of helpfulness which prompts you to give assitance in a manner so new and so generous. Please tell me how were you impressed in reading my brother's last news?"

"It is not possible to express in words the impressions one receives at the reading of your brother's writings. How the world is filled with sorrow and how perfect it might be if mankind could perceive the true light. The strongest thoughts arise in my mind. Why should we waste our time at school when the world is in such a need of active workers in the lines traced by the Reconstructive Movement?"

Olga became very earnest and drawing closer to her friend, said:

"Ernestine, you are doing the work best adapted for you at present. Continue faithfully in your studies and by the time that your active work in the world is needed you will be so eminently fitted for it that your presence will be a luminous guide for many. Your correspondence with Ivanohe will be a great help to you. From this safe retreat you will know and understand all the events and causes that will bring the mighty

changes in human affairs. Therefore gently curb your impatience and prepare yourself for the day when the call will be made for you."

"Thank you," said the young girl. "Your disposition is more positive, and you have more experience than I have. Would you like to have me give you a few ideas of what I wrote lately to your brother?"

Olga looked at the clock.

"It will not take me long."

"We will have to arrange for more frequent meetings," said Olga. "Matters are becoming very interesting. Suppose we meet every week instead of every two weeks. Will it interfere with your tasks?"

"Not necessarily," said Ernestine; "let it be every week, the same evening." And the matter was settled.

"Now I am all attention," said Olga, and Ernestine began:

"Before I began to write I was entirely absorbed in contemplating the fact how the lack of knowledge deprived the human family from enjoying the most exquisite delights. A panorama seemed to appear before my vision. It seemed to represent the world. The mass of inhabitants was enormous and there was great restlessness and discord. They were all craving for something to bring them happiness, to bring them peace, but found none of a lasting kind. The inward struggle was reflected in the external appearance. Care, anxiety and worry disfigured them. In their eagerness to gain happiness the most worldly bound created divisions, drew lines of distinction in the human family, thereby increasing the destructive propensities. Bright flashes could be discerned, shedding light in every direction, but the eyes of the people were bent to earth seeing nothing but the hideous results of their own creation. The wondrous flashes increased in brightness and revealed the remedy to dispel the universal gloom. One bright flash made appear the sublime sentence—Man, know thyself!—Another, Look above the dust for Life, Divine Life, Love and Truth! Still another. Only from above can you gather the harmony, peace and abundance which are your rightful inheritance look up! And yet another, Ye children of God, awake! awake! enough have you fed among the swine, turn

your steps unto the presence and become One with the Universal Principle in which you live, move and have your being, your only Father! As I looked at the great mass my heart felt sad. No attention did they pay to the sure remedies that were offered them. The vision impressed me so strongly that I feel now, more than ever, that mankind is groping in darkness. The ecclesiastical structure, called the church of Christ, is organized more according to worldly and human ideas and bears not the slightest resemblance to the spiritual teachings of our highest and noblest teacher, the Good Nazarene! He understood that every human being is his king and priest. Mankind gropes in darkness, it has sunk deep into a state of idolatry. The god it has created is selfishness, which obscures its true character and instead of showing forth its god-like possibilities, it grovels in the dust. The souls of men need the right instruction which will prove to them the potent bread of life, and when they partake of it, the kingdom of heaven will appear on earth. This, and much more which appeared to me, I wrote down and sent it to your brother, and I do hope he will not put me down as a sentimentalist, a visionary or a dreamer."

"My brother," said Olga, "is a deep thinker. He has a refined nature, not a refinement as the world regards it, the external polish which often covers individual coarseness, and I know that he fully agrees with your metaphysical and scientific views, and now, let us retire," and so they did.

At the expected time both friends received news from Ivanohe and both impatiently waited for the appointed evening, and when they met, earlier than usual, Olga said:

"Now, you read first, and in order to save time, let us read only the most salient points."

"I would like so much to hear you first," said Ernestine.

"Very well. Here he tells me how, having accepted the invitation to attend a meeting of the Brotherhood of Destruction, he was asked if he was willing to submit to their rules, which, they informed him, were very strict. He replied in the affirmative and was ready, but they must not postpone it too long, as his time was very precious. One afternoon a carriage stopped at the hotel where he was, and being called, as he appeared a sign

was made by which he understood that he was to be conveyed to the meeting place."

"I entered the carriage," he continues, "and found myself in complete darkness as soon as the carriage door was closed. It was a very long, dreary ride. We must have traveled at least five hours when there was a sudden stop. The carriage door was opened and it was night. I found myself surrounded by a number of dark, shadow-looking beings. Not a word was spoken and quicker than I could say it a bandage was fastened around my eyes. I felt a tight grasp around each arm and I could hear a heavy tread of someone walking in front and another in the rear. The walk was so long that I began to wish it would come to an end. I noticed that we turned several sharp angles and ascended and descended what appeared a good sized hill. I heard a prolonged shrill sound and my escorts slackened their steps. From the sensation I felt I concluded that we were in close proximity to some solid structure. There was a halt, and apparently a hurried consultation, when again we resumed our march. We descended two steps and there was a smooth, sandy walk. We stopped again, and what appeared from the sound, a massive door, opened. We went up three steps and found ourselves in what I judged to be a large corridor, or entrance. The floor was either of marble or polished stone. Again we stopped and another heavy door was opened. We entered and I heard the sound of many steps. A chair was shoved under me and I was glad to sit down. About five minutes elapsed when an individual approached me and courteously saiyng, pardon me, sir, he removed the bandage from my eyes. I arose and stood face to face with my friend, Mr. K. He greeted me heartily and said he felt safe to say that I expected no apology and that I am the only one admitted into that extraordinary place, and that I had not been put through the most severe rules of their order, and that I may account for that to their irresistable desire to obtain my powerful co-operation in a struggle upon which hangs the destiny of mankind.

"'This is our ante-room, your arrival has been announced and the brothers are anxious to welcome you.' I looked around; it was a very comfortable apartment. The ceiling was beautifully decorated with emblems representing the object and scope of

the organization. Large mirrors hung from the walls, their rich gold frames were beautiful to behold. The furniture was of elegant designs and shapes and every piece seemd to have been made to combine beauty and comfort. My host evidently enjoyed the admiration with which I was looking around, and said: 'All that you see is the product of the skill and industry of our Brotherhood. Everyone has contributed cheerfully for the comfort and delight of all. Now, if you are rested, we will no longer keep the brothers in suspense, and if you allow me'--- he took me by the arm and we walked together to a certain point. 'Now,' he said, 'I will take you by a very short route. Sit down, please, and hold yourself firm. We must take all kinds of precautions. Now, if you are ready.' Before I became aware there was a motion so rapid and a movement so complicated that I could not tell whether we went up, down or around, and found ourselves before a large crimson velvet portierre, the ends of which were caught up with heavy golden cords. Collecting myself after that sudden and unexpected whirl, I realized that we were on a large platform, and in front of us was a large assembly. My escort arose and motioning to me he stepped to the front and said: 'Brothers and friends, it is my honor and pleasure to introduce to you a gentleman whom you all know, if not personally, from reputation. He is the head member of the Brotherhood of Reconstruction.' The whole assembly rose to their feet and the salute, the welcome and greetings which they so enthusiastically extended affected me considerably. A large number of ladies were present and it was a bright and cultured gathering.

"The presiding officer, after having obtained perfect order, invited the speaker of the evening to the platform. He arose and slowly came forward. He was a handsome man about 35 years old. In a clear, resonant voice he began to portray the whole social structure. With a vividness that made the heart sick he uncovered the sores and ulcers which destroy the social body. 'And,' said he, with a terrible emphasis, 'is there any one on this groaning earth who would have the temerity to insinuate that we must stand by and witness much longer and support a system which makes all groveling cowards? Are we, the members of this Brotherhood, to be influenced by it? ["No! no!

no!" came the answer in thundering tones from the audience.] The ever increasing human greed for money is attracting our attention to that land where there would really be no need for hardship and poverty. The worshippers of mammon of that great land are boasting that they annually export to foreign countries millions upon millions of dollars worth of products, while a congress of physicians have recently ascribed to it that an enormous number of people become bereft of their reason and are sent to insane asylums, and thousands upon thousands are dragging cheerless lives in almshouses! Thousands upon thousands of children under five years of age die annually, due to the lack of proper nourishment, clothing and shelter! ["Horrible! Horrible!" cried out the audience.] Will any one with a sane head on his or her shoulders, tell us that a system whch possesses not a single redeeming feature shall be allowed to remain, covering this glorious mother earth with ever increasing poverty, suffering and crime?' The whole assembly had risen to their feet and with fierce gestures they cried: 'Down! with the system and its supporters!'

"I tell you, my dear sister, the speech was long and impressive, and it is not surprising if they succeed in convincing the people, who have obtained no other information, that no other avenue remains open for those who want to redeem the people from impending slavery but the Destructive movement. We will now, said the president, conduct our guest to the different departments, that he may have a glimpse of what human skill can accomplish when free to act. 'I say free, which of course is not correct, for we have not yet obtained the blessed freedom.' He drew his chair close to mine and said: 'We will first visit our picture gallery.' While he was talking I felt several vibrations on the platform, and in the twinkling of an eye we went through a similar motion as the one that brought us before the assembly. We were in a very spacious corridor, brightly lighted, with large, handsomely ornamented chandeliers, and we were standing before a large column of people whom I recognized as those whom we had left in the hall. A heavy folding door swung open and a dazzling view appeared before my eyes. None of the picture galleries that I had seen could be compared with that one. Each painting represented life sized occurrences in real life

which the Brotherhood denounced so fiercely. Poverty with its deadening influence, its sorrows and despair The possessors of wealth looking upon human misery with contempt and turning from it as they would from pestilence. Squalid, cold and dark prisons with brutalized inmates. I stood in front of a very large canvas. The subject it represented was executed in a manner so real that I had to make an effort to move on. On the foreground the twin monsters—as they call them—the state and the church, were represented. The first by a magnificent capitol and the second by a highly ornamented structure resembling a cathedral. The subtle performance of both institutions was represented with so much ingenuity and power of suggestion that the attention of the beholder was led to the immense human industrial field. The hardships and privations of the toilers could almost be felt. At times it seemed as if the pressure was so crushing that they would turn to the state for relief, but the state frowned on them while it smiled approvingly at the doings of a lot of bankers, corporations, trusts and syndicates. The bowed-down toilers then turned imploringly to the church, where every time their eyes met some well fed, well dressed and well provided servant of the Lord, who, with piously drawn face, would point with up-stretched hand to heaven—not here on earth but over there will you find what you are asking for—the suggestive attitude seemed to say. That painting spoke volumes. I could have remained on the spot for hours. I stepped reluctantly to another painting of equal size as the other and I still can recall the sensation of a shudder that ran through me as I stood there and realized the full import of the artist's idea. State and church again conspicuously in the foreground, as in the other. The dark, damp, filthy prison represented in the underground Human beings could be seen steeped in filth, some crowding in different positions and some could be seen in a tremor as they tried to free themselves from filthy insects that crowded every uncovered part of their bodies. Others, with faces upturned, with such frightful expressions that it was impossible to guess whether they were sending up prayers or curses. Others were completely broken and cowed down, and the filthy substance could be seen falling in big drops upon their heavily chained bodies. Another place of torture which showed the brutal cruelty of man to man

was the prison so arranged that the wretches who, as a rule, were men who had lifted their voices against oppression and tyranny, were kept constantly standing in mud and water. The water was kept rising all the time and in order not to be drowned they were kept busy emptying it in another direction. The sight of them was horrible and appealed to every humane sentiment. Some of them in their helplessness and hopelessness would turn their eyes to the direction of where state and church were forever ready—the one to point to large law books, to gallows, guillotines, and around and about it were black mouthed cannons, glittering bayonets and other life-destroying missiles. Another large finger pointed to the arsenal of destruction peculiar to the church. An immense sized thumbscrew, the rack, and one could almost hear the snapping crack of the fagot and other instruments for inflicting inconceivable torture, were in plain sight, while, with contortions sickening to behold, the servants of the Lord would, in response to the agonizing appeal of the victims, point down to the furnace of everlasting burning. The horrible interior of other prisons were shown. Do you remember of the prisons, 'Sotto i piombi,' described by S. P., which you and I when quite young, used to read and wondered how people could ever exist even for a short time and not become raving maniacs? There they were as true as life. I felt the greatest admiration for the real genius of the artist and tore myself away and went to the next large canvas, which represented a battle field. Again, on the foreground, were to be seen the twin institutions. I do not believe that even those who were witnesses on the battle ground could realize the horrors of the legal wholesale murdering called war! Many awful details that would escape the attention during the unnatural excitement of the war were presented in all their ghastliness by the artist. The effect produced on the imagination acts so strangely on the nerves as to set them into a quiver. All the machinery of destruction, the regiments ready for the fray—men in full vigor and life ready to destroy life, ready to kill their fellow beings who have done each other no harm, have perhaps never seen each other, might have been true friends!

"I tell you sister, the thoughts that flowed through my mind as I stood viewing that scene came very near making me lose my faith in the possibility of reconstructing society. To think

for one moment that thousands, yes, millions of men, drilled and armed to the teeth, could be induced to look upon a wholesale destruction of that precious gift, human life, as patriotic, to please the whims, the caprices of a few arrogant tyrants! Mankind has, with an extreme lack of the sense of the fitness of things, called war an art! Taxing the nations, loading them with unpayable debts, adopting continually more and more improved weapons of destruction, taking the ablest bodied men from useful occupations, making them heavy burdens upon the industry of others and maiming and crippling the most useful members of society, all this is called an art. Are we really sane? I now convey to you but a faint idea of how this great artist has so really reproduced on canvas the horrible scenes after the battle. The 'twin monsters,' as they call them, show their dreadful power more than ever after the unutterable suffering, both physical and moral, which they inflicted on their submissive subjects. The state, which succeeded in murdering and crushing the most, tries with deceiving words of heroism and patriotism to lift the funeral pall which hangs low over the bereaved homes of the people, while the church is beside itself in offering hymns and anthems which a just God must certainly abhor!

"The more I looked upon the scene the more my soul became oppressed. The many other paintings were equally as strong and effective in presenting human misery and woe. I expressed a strong desire to see the artist but was informed that he was not present but out in the world gathering new ideas for other productions. The brotherhood has a strong belief that the artist's skill is furnishing them with a moral arsenal and that its powerful effect will in due time produce the needed explosion which will destroy the present abominable system. I feel convinced that this brotherhood has made no mistake in this point. Do you recall how often we wondered how easy 'Cola di Rienzo' swayed the Roman people by firing their imagination with paintings representing their wretched conditions? The effect which these paintings produce I must own is most remarkable.

"I was next taken through a very dark passage into another large room which was a chemical laboratory. There experts were to prepare explosive matter of all kinds. The latest inventions in chemical combinations were there fully mastered,

and the longing prayer, may our Reconstructive Brotherhood succeed, so these fearful combinations shall not be needed to devastate God's earth, went up from the depths of my heart. Next I was taken through an opening, which, only those familiar with it would have discovered, so ingeniously was it concealed from view. The dimension of this place was large. Heavy colonnades supported a ceiling which was cut out in the massive stone. In orderly array were to be seen implements of destruction of every kind. If the oppressors of mankind could take a look at what I saw they would gladly change their conduct toward their fellow beings. I was requested to promise not to reveal anything of what I had seen or heard, and therefore as soon as you have read this please destroy it. The president regretted it was so very late. He wished I could see how the stage work was to be changed, how it was no longer to be used as it had been heretofore, to simply amuse and misdirect the public mind, but to instruct and prepare it for a reform work which is so colossal in its principles, and, said he, very impressively, all that you have seen is multiplying to such an extent that if the thoughtless and arrogant bosses had the least idea, they would be so surrounded by fear that they would turn to better things."

"We hope," he continued, "that you may have the pleasure to meet our friend the artist. He is a native of that classic land, the garden of Europe, reduced by the bad government to beggary and ignorance, the land of song and poetry, Italy! He was rescued by two of our brothers from a sad ending induced by despair of a hard and unsuccessful struggle. About eighteen months ago the two members of our brotherhood were returning from another section. They were crossing a mountain, and had reached the summit when they noticed that they were not alone, from the fact that not far from where they stood there were some objects on the ground. They went closer and saw a large brimmed hat and painter's tools, etc., etc. They looked at each other and then looked around for the owner of what they beheld. But nobody was in sight. They noticed a piece of paper fastened to a branch of a tree near by. They went to it, pulled it off and examined it. Written in a strong, bold hand were the following words: 'Farewell, oh world! Thou canst not under-

stand the silent torture of a soul whose only aim was to love and serve thee. Not for gain and selfish glory would I have let my mind dwell in the exalted realm of the beautiful, but to feed the souls of others, and thereby pacify the internal discord which consumes the best—the best of which mankind is capable! Farewell! A. Z.' A suicide's farewell, whispered both at the same time. Let us hasten to find him! They went silently, looking right and left, and finally separated. The search lasted several hours. The would-be suicide had taken great pains to accomplish his purpose. At the risk of their own lives the two brave brothers rescued the man whose life was almost extinct as he was drawn up from the deadly precipice! We have detained you much longer than we intended and we sincerely hope this will not be your last visit, and whenever you should find yourself in ——here, he whispered in my ears the names of the different countries and provinces where their brotherhood had similar headquarters, and smilingly he said: We all keep our eyes on you and you shall be treated as you have been here. Now, we will bid you farewell and your escorts will again take charge of you. I felt moved at the warmth and friendly feeling with which each one took leave of me. It was not an ordinary, every-day sort of people I was to depart from. It was a people in whom dwelleth qualities which, if well used, would create great epochs in the world's history. My eyes were again bandaged and the same precautions taken, but I became aware that we were on a different route. The distance seemed about the same and the carriage was in waiting, but the bandage was not taken off until I was in it and we had gone quite a distance, when they stopped, opened the door, and, apologizing, I was told that following the instruction I was to be relieved. The bandage disappeared, but everything was done so rapidly that the door was closed before I could get a glimpse from outside. I sat in darkness and the drive seemed even longer than the former, but my thoughts were so busy with what I had seen that I was very patient, and in due time I was asked to alight and found myself in close proximity to the hotel. This is my first experience with the Brotherhood of Destruction. I have gained many new ideas which may be utilized in the future, and I have conceived an idea which I hardly dare to entertain and will therefore not

speak of it at this time. I have received a letter from your friend, and, as you probably know, I have answered it. She is certainly a remarkable young lady. Please give her my very best regards and write to me as soon as you can. Your loving brother, Ivanohe."

Olga glanced at the clock——"And here is my letter," said Ernestine. "What shall we do?"

"I'll tell you," replied Olga, "tomorrow is a half holiday. I had nearly made up my mind to join the excursionists, but now I prefer to remain."

"And I know you will not object," said Ernestine, "I will keep you company, and now, I say good night," and they parted.

CHAPTER VII.

When Ernestine returned next day she found Olga as usual waiting for her, and soon they were ready, the one to read and the other to listen. In respectful terms Ivanohe thanked his sister's friend for the honor and pleasure of being allowed to exchange thoughts and ideas with one who appeared far above the ordinary kind of young ladies; one, who at an early stage in life would lift her mind above the petty and frivolous things which as a rule fill the thoughts of young women.

"Your letter," he wrote, "has been very instructive to me. I too, do believe that regeneration is vitally essential to a true life, and through it alone when rightly understood does the transformation take place. Mankind has for so many centuries lost sight of its rightful inheritance. The Nazarene's words to Nicodemus have remained a mystery to a world completely steeped in materiality. But the light is appearing and the true meaning of the words 'You must be born from above or you cannot see the kingdom of heaven,' is becoming apparent to every seeker of Truth. All true and permanent reform has its beginning with the individuals. To insure a correct result the units in a problem must be in right relation. Selfishness, prejudice, and all false notions must be overcome by each individual in order to obtain complete harmony. You and other broad minded women will some day be called to create a new school of thought. Mankind has been feeding on husks and resting upon a tottering foundation, and why? Because it has never been taught the real truth of its being. Man, made in the likeness and image of the Creator, on account of the wrong teachings, has created a world of oppressors and victims acting or being acted upon by the destroying forces called pride, envy, greediness, hate and sensuality. We are learning that thoughts have a dynamic power, and ideas create vibrations in the universal ether. Therefore, in order to establish a permanent reform, the very best and most elevating ideas must be presented to the minds of the people, and improve their environments; then will a wonderful transforma-

tion take place and the new world will appear. Every reformer in the twentieth century who is well posted on the problems of the day, knows that any amount and any kind of reform work is useless unless womankind is raised from a condition which casts out and distorts woman's great loveliness of soul into practical falsehoods! The searching light of science has revealed to us that while the development of woman's gifts and talents has been dwarfed, their ambitions, pride and inordinate selfish motives have been stimulated. One of the most poisonous stimulus, as science teaches, is 'fashion,' which perverts the female character from its sweetness and purity into a cold, heartless, vain, coquettish being. And when can such dreadful wickedness cease? Only when women arise and arm themselves against it, and rely mainly on their own natural charms and mental culture, which alone can make them more perfect and beautiful; then will the monstrous tempter of female virtues, 'the press,' the 'fashion magazines,' completely disappear. No one who reads the articles in the press concerning the fashions will disapprove our calling it the 'monstrous tempter of female virtue.' Again and again men have tried to rise alone, but every time they have had to learn that through the operation of an inexorable law men and women must rise or fall together. It has become a fixed idea in my mind that the Reconstructive Movement can be carried to a grand success if we can discover the means by which we can awaken the dormant faculties of women. To leave them in the present lethargic condition, or arouse them only enough so as to drag them along, I can forsee nothing but an abortive attempt, but if we succeed in getting them to realize the true situation, and they enthusiastically are willing to co-operate, the result for good will be great! I would like to write to you so much more but I know your time is taken up by your studies. Hoping you will kindly pardon me, yours very respectfully, Ivanohe."

The two friends remained silent for a while, and then Ernestine began.

"My dear friend, your brother's letter ought to be in every woman's hands, and, no doubt, many would feel a sting of guilt as I do. It never appeared to me as it does after reading this remarkable communication. It has recalled to my mind an incident which had remained for a long time strongly impressed upon me,

but lately had begun to fade, and now it is as vivid as when it happened. In our tour through Italy we stopped in one of the quaint old towns of Piedmont. The surroundings were very picturesque. One day we were strolling around greatly enjoying the beautiful scenery when we noticed a young girl coming from behind a large tree, a basket on her arm. On seeing us she stopped with a sudden start, and then remained motionless like a statue Her lips were parted and her eyes moved rapidly, looking from one to another. Her attitude showed plainly her surprise at the apparition of strangers. We had heard that the people were very poor, and on that particular day Mrs. Jenken had insisted that we should appear as gorgeous and gay as the butterflies of the fields The girl we saw was 15 or 16 years old. She was tall but well formed, her face was of a radiant beauty in spite of a faded old handkerchief tied around her head. The coarse and ill-fitting dress could not disfigure her well developed form. I felt strongly tempted to speak to her, as I had studied the Italian language, but Mrs. Jenken interfered. 'A nice looking beggar,' she said, with visible contempt. 'Don't speak to her,' she said to me, and passed haughtily by the motionless girl. The idea haunted me for a long time; that by some mysterious way the unkind act of Mrs. Jenken had aroused a hostile feeling in the strange child, because any one could see that something like a dark cloud settled on her pretty face. I must have shown the pain I felt, for, as she looked at me it disappeared, a delicate flush tinted her cheeks and a faint smile moved her lips. Again and again the sentences I once heard, and think are true, appeared strongly before my mind, that 'Every fashionable woman is a disgrace to her sex.' When will this age of 'fuss and feathers,' shows and shams, lies and pretenses, and artificialities without realties, end? Oh, if women would only spend the time and expense in improving their womanhood now squandered on fashion, how inconceivably lovlier, happier and better would they render the world! Think how fashion dissipates women's minds!

"Not far from the town was an old church very much renowned for its ancient architectural style and superb paintings, and we were to visit it before resuming our journey, so, the next Sunday, our proud friend, Mrs. Jenken, would not consent to go unless we should appear in our most stylish apparel. She wanted to

be admired even by the poor, ignorant peasantry in that far-off corner of the land. Powdered, perfumed, and richly decked, our party, or we, I may say, entered through the wide portals of the great edifice. The church was filled with people, the men on one side and the women on the other. They were all dressed in a plain, coarse costume, and they were evidently praying as their heads were all bent down. We walked slowly forward to where we had noticed some empty seats, when I noticed a figure kneeling in one of the front rows. Turning cautiously around, and seeing us, a smothered exclamation escaped from her lips and she jumped up to her feet. The person next to her grasped her by the arm and compelled her to resume her position. I recognized her; it was the girl we had seen a few days before. The rest of the party were busy in seating themselves comfortably. Whether it was the rustling of the silk garments or anything else, we were hardly seated when the whole assembly had their eyes fixed upon us. The appearance of the priest acted like a reminder to the people and soon their heads were turned toward the altar. Was it a coincidence or was it meant as a warning? During the sermon, to which I was listening with much attention, the priest said: 'The worst kind of a sin is to crave for luxuries, the purpose of which is only to gratify human vanity.' I saw him fix his eyes on the girl, who made a strong gesture, at the same time turning abruptly and looking at me with burning eyes. I felt guilty, for it was plain enough to see that our presence was acting as an evil influence up the poor people. I had not learned at that time what I know now, that magnificent garments and ornaments used by the oppressors, have always seduced the eyes of the multitude and rendered them more easily submissive. I was peculiarly impressed that the poor girl would go through some dreadful experience in her life, and I would know all about it. It was odd, was it not, that such a thought should occur to me?"

"Time will prove it, my dear," said Olga.

"In a day or two I will answer again to your brother. His kind consideration for the good of others, and his advanced ideas, contrast so strongly with the sentiments expressed in this letter which I have received from home. Think what a gulf exists between me and my relatives! Think of the noble and humane endeavors of your brother and his co-workers, and compare them with the news of the self-indulgence, the shameful extravagance in the face of want and

poverty! Read further on, how are described the laces worn by women dotted with tiny diamonds as if woven in its meshes. Gowns adorned with real brilliants. Pearls dyed to match exactly any shade in silk brocades. Dogs being jeweled and decked in costly materials, while the little, helpless, dear children suffer the pangs of hunger and cold! I will read no further; I leave it to you. Let us go out for a walk"——and out they went.

When they returned Miss Olga played the music that so strongly affected her young friend, as well as many of the other guests.

"I feel so rested and calm now," said Ernestine.

"And so do I," replied Olga, "and I think this has been a very enjoyable day."

In due time they separated, and next day when Ernestine was walking home from school, she heard someone walking fast behind her, and she drew a little aside, wondering who the hurrying person might be, when she heard her name called, and, turning around, she stood facing the young authoress whom she had assisted in her literary career. The young authoress' face was beaming with joy, and, still holding Ernestine's hand, told her she had gone to the excursion the day previous hoping to meet her, but having failed to see her, she had been uneasy and nothing would relieve her but to take the trip and come directly to see her. Ernestine listened with a happy smile on her face. "Let us walk slowly," she said, "and tell me what you are doing. Are you stifll contented with your chosen occupation?"

"My contentment is complete. You probably remember the book I was writing when I saw you last. I realized a good profit on it. I have commenced another one. My imagination was much stirred up yesterday, for I can see glimpses of an adventure, and—perhaps, a tragedy. It gave me, or it put me on a new train of thought, which may furnish many interesting points. The weather was considered yesterday by everybody perfect. The part of the country visited by the excursionists was an ideal spot. My first thought was to look for you, and my heart was full of joy in the anticipation of spending that lovely day in your company, out in the open air, surrounded by such natural beauty. I will not mention a word of the void I felt, when, after looking and searching for you, among the large throng, found you were not among the pleasure seekers. However, I did not allow the tormentor

called disappointment to dwell long within me, and I was struck by the idea that I had a good opportunity for the study of human nature. I noticed an inviting place and hastened to it. There were three large oak trees forming a semi-circle, and abundant mosses making a soft, comfortable seat. From that point I had a splendid view of the bright and animated scene. My mind was made up to pass the time as an interested spectator, and, being alone, I took out of my satchel a book and writing material, I can never dispense with, especially when visiting strange places. My whole attention was soon taken up. Unrestricted and free I enjoyed the ever changing panorama, but I was soon startled out of my contemplative mood by a male voice which said in a tone which denoted much impatience:

"'My dear, excuse me, but I have told you so often that you act so childish, and put me in a ridiculous position. Now, don't begin to cry, you know how it irritates my nerves.'

"I heard steps approaching slowly and a voice sweet and trembling said:

"'Arthur, I feel that my presence is burdensome to you, and the thought nearly crushes me.' 'Hush!' replied the other voice, more impatiently, 'someone may hear you. I will not have this day spoiled, be——and look cheerful like the rest of the people, and no more scenes. I will not endure them!' 'Arthur, why did you force me to come here, when my heart is filled with sorrow and bitterness. How can I look and be cheerful?' 'Confound your obstinacy! You will drive me to make use of some extreme measure!' 'Arthur! Do your worst! You ill treat, threaten, and make me miserable in every conceivable way; you have ruined my life.' They were approaching so near to where I sat that I made a noise by rolling down some stones, and the talking ceased. Pretty soon two figures advanced and walked faster. I did not look up from my book until they had gone a little distance, and then I began to examine them. An elegantly attired gentleman, and leaning on his right arm a very stylishly dressed young lady. Her form was perfect, but what was it that caused her to appear awkward and ill at ease in her fine garments? At a glance one could see that he was a man of the world, while her timidity and embarrassment reminded me of a simple, unaffected peasant girl not familiar with the demands of style and fashion. When they were about fifty feet from where I sat, I saw them stand still, and it was plain to see that they were quarreling. The lady suddenly

withdrew her arm from his and sprang into a shady place at her left. He looked cautiously around and then ran after her. A vivid curiosity arose within me and I was determined to keep a close watch on the two individuals who so unexpectedly had appeared on the scene. I gathered my belongings and went to the opposite direction where the couple had disappeared. After looking in all directions and not seeing them I resumed my walk with the intention of mingling with the crowd so as not to arouse any suspicion. While almost completely absorbed in this matter I caught a glimpse of my new benefactress, Madame Konrad. She is a lady, who, I know, you would like to get acquainted with. She resides in a beautiful villa some miles from here, where she invited me on several occasions. Having read my book, a great desire on her part to know the author brought us together. She has a loving and generous heart and she is a very deep thinker. One day she very earnestly said to me: 'My dear young friend, the time is approaching fast when your talent will be needed, and your writings will be of great value, when the Reconstructive Movement will try to evolve order out of the present chaos and confusion, to obtain peace instead of riots, and love instead of hatred. Would you mind telling me your history, how you became an able writer?' I told her of my hard struggle and your rescuing work. She listened with much attention, and when I finished, said: 'A noble deed! God bless her!' When I saw her on the grounds she was conversing with some friends and beckoned to me. I went to her. She appeared so glad to see me. The friends that were with her I had met at her home, and I was greeted with every sign of cordiality and good will. 'Are you engaged in anything new?' inquired Madame. 'Yes, I replied, and I fancied a while ago that I would gather today some material for my work. The object of my observation is a young couple.' The friends exchanged glances——'Do you know anything concerning them?' asked Madame. 'I do not, Madame,' I replied, 'but I should not be surprised if some day the public will be shocked by some unlooked for tragedy.' 'I did notice the couple,' continued the lady, 'and the unfortunate girl is certainly to be pitied. The young man is handsome, but his dissipated life is plainly marked on his countenance.'

"If you allow me, Miss, I would like to ask you what are your conjectures?"

"My conjectures are that the young, beautiful creature is one of

our simple, innocent rural doves, snatched from her home by the duplicity and base treachery of some city unprincipled 'Don Juan.' The poor girl's heart may break, her whole life be blasted, but what do the young rascals of that stamp care? I have made up my mind to keep an eye on them, and follow them if need be, to see how the affair will end."

"There are too many of these cases," said the lady, "and that is one of the reasons why we must spread the principles of the Reconstructive Movement." A cordial invitation to visit her and with a friendly adieu we parted.

"What I saw during the remainder of the afternoon confirmed me more and more that I was not mistaken. Once I had almost lost them entirely out of sight, the throng was so large, and I was hurrying in the direction where they had disappeared, and when the big crowd began to spread out in different parts I found myself but a few yards from them. The young man took a handkerchief out of his pocket and I saw something like a card fall to the ground. As they moved on and I had reached the place where they had been, I picked up the card and discovered that he is a member of an Italian noble family. On the back of the card was written the name of the hotel where they are staying and tomorrow I will take a tour around that place. I hope I have not wearied you."

"No, indeed," said Ernestine, "it has interested me very much, and if what you suspect is true I wish something could be done to save that girl."

"So do I, and now, I bid you a hasty good bye. Please give my regards to Miss Olga."

"Can't you spare a moment and come and speak to her?"

"Not today, though it would please me very much. I have a great deal to do which will probably take part of the night. Good bye."

As Ernestine was approaching the building she saw Olga coming hurriedly toward her.

"You are late, my dear," she said. "I went to your room, and not finding you there, I came to meet you. I have been wanting to see you sooner, but could not spare a moment. The letter you left me I would like to send to my brother, and I came to ask your permission. It reveals to me a serious state of affairs in your country, the country he looks to with so much hope and confidence. Your

mother's and other wealthy American women's bitter denunciations of the sentiments expressed on the senate floor by a United States senator——although I admit that the language might have been more refined, it plainly shows that instead of admitting their mistakes and correcting them, they are bent on doing worse. Some of the words spoken by the senator which have aroused so much hostility, and your mother thought wise to send to you, with the intention, no doubt, to prejudice your mind, are, that rich American girls are 'fatted heifers,' enriched at the expense of the plain people and sent to Europe in trade for titles. He predicted the fall of the republic unless a change in the order of things was made. You do not object to my sending the letter to Ivanohe, and I thank you. Seeing the danger, it will spurn the Reconstructive Movement to greater activity. Have you already written to him?"

"No, I intend finishing the letter tonight, and being a little late, I can only tell you that I saw Miss Florence and the next time we meet you will hear all she told me," and so, quickly they separated.

The day that Ivanohe received Ernestine's letter he had been making preparations for a prolonged journey. The Reconstructive Movement in Germany had requested his immediate presence. Important events were transpiring in that country of deep thinkers. The march of human progress, and the mightiest social and economic revolution the world had ever seen, was presenting unmistakable symptoms of a sudden eruption. Therefore, the leaders of that movement from every country were to meet in a great conference. The patient and submissive German proletariat had finally lifted its head. It seemed as if for the first time they understood that their beloved fatherland was turned into a drill ground. With apprehension and terror they witnessed the inroads which a military system makes upon the liberty of the people. The awakening appeared too sudden and a terrible reaction was feared. Ivanohe's calm judgment and his perfect knowledge of the great undertaking was not affected by the restless attitude, on the contrary he rejoiced that the much needed hour of awakening was drawing near. He rejoiced at the thought that the people were becoming conscious of the irresistible power of the principles of equity and justice. When the great masses of humanity shall be penetrated, heart and soul, with the high ideals of those principles, the continents of this blessed earth will no longer bristle with bayonets and glare with the barbaric splendor

and ostentation of so-called professional officers, who in reality are nothing but artistically and scientifically trained wholesale murderers! And who can abolish the reign of the brute force but the intelligent mass of the people? The Reconstructive Movement will surely succeed in making them understand that the brute destroying force has always been in the hands of a ruling minority, and they are the ones who have denied the people the right to establish the supreme authority of their will, which alone, when rightly practiced, can inaugurate a civilization which will manifest the good will to all men, and peace eternal! Only when the great masses of the people will understand the great principles that develop the moral and intellectual forces, and in this advanced age, the 20th century, they will conquer the present evils, and they will not do what they did in the past, leaving the fruits of their victories in the hands of their tyrannical enemies, who in a short time renewed again their oppression and buried the people's sublime ideals of liberty, their noble sentiments of human equality, and turned the tide of civilization backward!

Having finished his preparations and read Ernestine's letter, the thought of a young sculptor who had joined the great movement and had sent him word saying that his presence, even if for only a little while, would bring him a great relief. Looking at his watch, and seeing that it was not late, he hurried down stairs, hailed a passing cab, gave the driver the address, and in due time found himself in the sculptor's presence. His intention had been to surprise his friend, and his presence not having been announced, the young man had covered his work, and turning toward the intruder, uttered a loud exclamation of joy. Their meeting was very cordial and at Ivanohe's friendly request the covering was removed, and then it was Ivanohe's turn to utter an exclamation of surprise and admiration. The conception was delicate and beautiful, but the depths of its significance stirred at once the mind and heart of the beholder. The artist's ideal could be read in every lineament and feature of the different features composing the group.

"This impressive allegory," said Ivanohe, "will stir up the hearts of the people in a manner so incisive and lasting as no words nor books could succeed in doing, and when the time for its mission is at hand, the effect it will produce upon the people will be the sweetest compensation to your genius and devotion to the human cause."

"Thank you," said the young man in a low tone, a tone whose ring was devoid of any gladness.

Ivanohe turned his eyes from the group and looked at the young man.

"My poor friend," said he, taking one of his hands, "why this mournful expression? Your face ought to show the radience of a happy soul. Speak, are you in any trouble?"

"Do not ask me, kind friend, I doubt whether you would understand me."

"I shall be very sorry to leave you——do you not trust me, might it not be my good fortune to be of service to you? Let us reason together——"

"Are you going to leave us?" asked the sculptor.

"Yes, and you see I shall feel uneasy if you conceal from me the cause of your despondency."

"I thank you for the interest you show toward me, but I have thus far failed to analyze the cause of my worry and discontent. It seems to lie very deep in the center of my heart, and the effect is more keen after I successfully work out my ideas. While I am at work, and my ideas are slowly evolving, I am perfectly happy; but when the work is finished, my heart feels empty and lonely. It longs and hungers for something which I do not understand. The praises and compliments I receive do not dispel, but deepen it, and I feel wretched."

A deep sigh accompanied the last words. Ivanohe sat a while in silence, and then spoke very impressively:

"Tell me frankly, do you find no relief in religion?"

"Religion?" replied the other musingly. "Many years ago religion seemed to bring peace to my troubled heart, but when knowledge destroyed my blind faith I turned against it, and now, when these moods come upon me I have no desire to live and am miserable."

"I believe I understand you. You are traveling through a route that many and many have traveled before you. It is a laborious and weary route. The doubts, the inner wrestling and struggles, the threatening collapse of hope and faith. Ah! yes! But press on, dear friend. Light will flash before your soul when it may appear the darkest. Remember what Emerson says:

"This energy," or we may call it, "this light, or realization of

the Supreme Intelligence, or God in our souls does not come into individual life on any other condition than entire possession. It comes to the lowly and simple; it comes to whomsoever will drop what is proud and selfish, it comes as insight, it comes as serenity and grandeur. When we see those whom it inhabits we are apprised of new degrees of greatness. From that inspiration, or 'realization,' man comes back with a changed tone. He no longer talks with men with an eye to their opinions. He is plain and true. He does not want admiration; dwells in the hour that 'now is.'"

Ivanohe paused. He saw the young man sit with folded hands, a restful expression appearing on his countenance. In a slow and subdued voice he said:

"Those words contain balm for my troubled heart. Do continue, please."

"I will. A passage which has proven to me an unerring guide and a source of strength and confirmed Emerson's suggestion of entire possession. 'And ye shall seek me and find me, when ye shall search for me with all your heart,' and I will complete it with the following by H. Emilie Cady: 'In that day, when more than riches and honor and power and selfish glory, you shall desire a scientific understanding of your "spiritual" being, in that day will come to you the revelation of God in your own soul, and you will be conscious of the indwelling father, who is Life, Strength, Power and Peace.'"

The young man had slowly risen to his feet, and gazing intently at Ivanohe, seemed to receive every word with a famishing heart.

"Thank heaven!" said Ivanohe, "the dark cloud shall no longer obscure your clear vision. There is work for you to do; a redeeming and holy work, a work which, if done in the right spirit, will fill your life with an overflowing happiness which the world cannot confer."

"Explain to me one thing," said the listener, with an entirely changed tone in his voice," you undoubtedly perceive what is going on in me. The distressing gloom and dejection have entirely vanished, and I feel a blessed calm and peace. Now tell me, is it your presence, or the effect of the words you have spoken which has operated this remarkable change?"

"The power of the truth contained in the words has touched a responsive chord in your soul, and this change, be assured, will be permanent when you cast away from you every thought which con-

flicts with it. Give those thoughts no quarter, and they can never molest you. Now, I will take another look at your exquisite production and then bid you farewell. I hope you will remember me in your leisure moments."

"I certainly will, and it shall be with a grateful heart. Your visit today will mark an important epoch in my life. I feel renewed and strengthened. I am ready to let my thoughts soar up higher than ever, in the realm of the beautiful and lofty, and if I succeed in producing something better, its conception will be due to the hope and enthusiasm which the uplifting words and your presence have kindled in my soul." Taking each other's hand they parted, Ivanohe delighted with the sculptor's noble ideas.

CHAPTER VIII.

When Ernestine and Olga met on the appointed evening they had only received a short notice of Ivanohe's departure for Germany. Ernestine had a letter from Miss Florence informing her "that her surmises in regard to the young couple were unfortunately true; that the young profligate scandalized the community with his reckless disregard for common decency. He left the hotel and had taken up his residence in one of the fine villas, where his dissipation and nightly orgies were frowned at and condemned by the better inhabitants, and the sad part of it is the desperate condition of the poor victim. He has dropped the mask altogether and exposes her to the rude and insulting advances of his guilty companions. It is reported that her life has become an intolerable burden, which she does not conceal from him, thereby increasing his ill temper and abusive treatment. It is also reported that she has attempted several times to escape, but he frustrated her plans. What the end will be no one can tell. I have gathered considerable information concerning the young woman, the poor, betrayed being. I wish I could succeed in saving her from a worse fate! With my best regards to you and Miss Olga, your very sincere friend, Florence."

"That is a sad case indeed," said Olga, "and the saddest is that the case of that young girl is one among numberless others. The great inequality existing among the people is a perennial temptation. The inferior classes are dazzled and overcome by the glitter and pomp displayed by the superior classes. Ivanohe is correct in his views regarding the pernicious influence of fashion and personal adornment. If the so-called superior classes would take the trouble to think they would realize how their elegant and brilliant appearance poisons the minds by awakening desires and longings which can only be satisfied by the poor forfeiting their honor and everything that is sacred and dear——there are tears in your eyes, Ernestine, what is the matter?"

"Do not stop your lashing," said the girl, mournfully. "The pitiful case of that girl appeals to my conscience with a poignant

remorse. Something impresses my mind that the poor victim is the girl I told you we met in Piedmont. The thought that our worldly example has caused the moral ruin of an innocent young girl!" Ernestine wept bitterly.

To the best of her ability Olga tried to console her, Ernestine shook her head and with a voice that sounded solemn, she replied:

"I understand and value the promptings of your friendly heart, but think for one moment of the wrecked life of a young girl, how one wrong step leads into another till the bottom is reached, and how many others will follow her! If her heart, which was pure and impressionable, should become hardened, it will exclude any ray of hope for reform. Olga, my heart is deeply troubled; this is the first time I wish to be alone; let me go to my room."

"If that is your wish I will not try to detain you. Would to God that every woman's heart were as noble and true as yours, then would frivolities and self-gratification disappear and make room for the qualities which raise human beings well nigh unto God!"

"Good night, Olga. I wish to collect my thoughts."

Olga, insisting no longer, led the girl out into the hall, where they parted.

Ernestine hurried to her room. Her mother kept her supplied with abundant means and she began to draw plan after plan how to utilize them for the rescue of the unfortunate girl. She wrote to Miss Florence informing her what she intended to do, and asking her advice. Before the time she looked for an answer she received a long letter from her.

"I do not suppose," she said, "that you have obtained the correct information through the papers, if you have read them. What I have feared has happened. Oh! how dreadful!" Ernestine's face turned pale and her hands trembled. "In order to obtain the best information I had rented a room at the gardener's cottage. My presence was not noticed by the occupants of the villa, as I was very cautious, and twice I caught a glimpse of the young woman. The last time I saw her she was walking fast up and down in a secluded spot. At times her sighs sounded like suppressed groans. She would wring her hands and then burst into passionate sobs. How I pitied her, how strong was my desire to approach her, but I did not dare for fear of being discovered. The orgies continued

almost without interruption, and night before last it was simply shocking, the reports of fire arms, mixed with shouts and shrieks! The gardener and his wife were nearly frantic with excitement. my condition was not much better. I had hurried out of my room into the next, where I found the husband and wife, he trying to rush out while his wife made desperate efforts to prevent him. On seeing me she gave a loud cry of relief, and begged me to help her. Great God! she cried, as the noise out doors increased. Oh, don't—don't go out! I went to her and laying my hand on her shoulder, I said: Good woman, calm yourself. This cannot last much longer. I have a strong desire to go out myself." "Oh! ! !" was all she could say. "I understand you," I said, trying to sooth her. "There may be danger, but with some caution——now, listen, everything is quiet——and so it was."

"You know the grounds well," I said to the gardener, who was much surprised in seeing me determined to go out, and——very well, Miss, he said——I will be ready quickly, and shall take my gun for any emergency."

"I hurried to my room and was soon ready. His wife did not know what to do. She was as much afraid to remain at home alone as to venture out in the dark, and finally we persuaded her to stay in the house, promising her to return as soon as possible. It was very dark as we stepped outside, and not being familiar in the place I kept very close to my escort, who would stop every moment, straining his eyes and ears.

"Did you hear that sound?" he whispered. I was listening very intently, and I thought I heard a faint sound of voices. Catching hold of my arm and drawing me brusquely to the right (we were, as I could judge in the darkness, behind a chiosco) in a very low tone the gardener said: "They may pass by this place or they may stop in there. It is a comfortable resting place. Sometimes the guests sit in there until their carriages arrive. Now, we must not stir, some one is coming." He could say no more as the steps and voices were quite distinct then.

"Confound the silliness of that woman and the stupidity of this idiot," said one in an irritated voice, "wake up, I say, let's shake him up. We can't drag him along in this manner. We will put him on one of the seats in the chiosco close by." "The cool night air will restore him," said a high pitched voice, "turn on your

left, there is the entrance." They went in, a flash of light appeared, and the first speaker said: "I see where the seats are," and in they went. "There now," he continued, "I feel a great relief. It is now nearly half past two and we will not have to wait long." There was a deep silence, only the heavy breathing of the third person could be heard. "Lucky for us all," the first speaker began again, "that this place is far enough from every other inhabited one, or this disgraceful affair might have brought upon us the attention of the authorities." "Let's not be too sure," replied the other, "I shall not feel easy for weeks to come. Can't tell what may turn up." "No danger," continued the first one, "the principal actor was too big a coward! Did not even take the time to enquire about the result of that silly woman's leap from the window—and like a mean and heartless brute thought of nothing but gathering his effects, ordered one of the swiftest horses and off he went like the wind!"

"By the way, how was she when you left her?"

"I believe that a few hours rest will restore her. Her luck, and ours too, for think of the consequences if the fall had proven fatal! Her garments were caught on the limb of a tree under the window, and although she was badly stunned, I feel positive that she is not seriously injured. I must own that for quite a while after we carried her in her lifeless appearance filled us with apprehension, but before we left there was strong evidence of returning consciousness. I admit it was not right to leave her alone, but you know how anxious we were to avoid exposure, and be off as quick as possible. Had it not been for the impudence of this stupid idiot nothing of the kind would have occurred. I must own to myself that I feel sorry for the young woman, from her manner and actions it is evident that she is not an adventuress. She is extremely beautiful, a beauty that in my opinion appeals more to a man's better than lower self. She was very unhappy and he would get awfully angry when she urged him to fulfill his promise to make her his lawful wife. She had been basely deceived, no doubt, and like many other victims, she may look with dismay into the future. Hark! There is the carriage. Now let us see if we can get this fellow on his feet. I wonder if he often drinks in this way."

"After a while we heard the carriage start, and with a great relief I said to the gardener, We will now retrace our steps and

ask your wife to come with us. We must not let that woman alone any longer than we can help it. As fast as we could we went back to the cottage and after a short explanation the wife was willing to go. Our deep concern in regard to the injured young woman lent wings to our feet and in spite of the occasional warning on the part of the gardener, his wife and I hurried on as fast as possible. As we arrived near the building we saw no light anywhere and we stood still for a moment.

"Now, if we knew from what window she jumped down——" the gardener began.

"That wouldn't help us one bit," rejoined his wife. "Let us go to the front door and if it is open I know which rooms she used to occupy."

"Following her advice we advanced slowly. The beautiful grounds with the well arranged walks stretched out before us, and surveying it on all sides we felt sure that we were undisturbed in our errand of mercy. We were now in front of the broad, fine steps that led up to the wide terrace with its handsomely carved portals. We followed the gardener's wife, who had slowly opened the door. The darkness and deep silence did not affect the brave woman, who led the way. It was a study to me. All fear seemed to have left her now, and it was very plain to see that the only thought that urged her was to relieve the sufferer. The large corridors and stairs were richly carpeted, and as light shadows we went around noiselessly. After reaching the second floor we heard sobbing sounds coming from one of the rooms. The gardener's wife took hold of my hand and gave it a tight grasp and I realized at that moment the great suspense and anxiety of the good woman. I'll try and go in first, she whispered, she knows me, but I am so afraid to startle her! She jumped up to the door and called her softly. Suddenly the sobbing ceased but no answer came. She called her again and there was a cry of recognition and we could hear her removing something as if she had barricaded the door. The door opened and in a trembling voice she said, oh, how merciful for you to come to me; this mortal terror would have driven me into insanity!

"'Are you seriously hurt, my poor child?'

"'I hope not. Something terrible has happened but I cannot realize what. My only thought since I have gained consciousness is to escape from this dreadful place. I do not trust myself. If

I allow myself to think how my life has been degraded since I left my poor but honorable home and in consequence of that wrong step what my future life will be, a feeling of despair seizes my heart and the only ray of hope to me is to put a sudden end to it all!'

"'I will call in a young lady, who, I know, will comfort you better than I can. My husband is here too.' She did not wait for an answer but rushed out and taking both by the hands, she drew us into the room. The light in the room was dim, and as I stood in front of her, sitting in a low chair, her face covered with both hands and sobbing bitterly, I was speechless. She appeared so completely crushed. The good gardener's wife, deeply moved, introduced me to her. She attempted to rise but did not succeed; my embarrassment instantly left me, and begging her to remain seated and taking another chair, I sat close by her and taking one of her hands, I said: 'Be of good cheer, we will make speedy arrangements to assist you to leave this place. I know one good, motherly lady who will gladly protect you. She will strengthen your good resolves.' Her eyes full of tears, and deeply affected, she gently withdrew her hand and again covered her face. Crying aloud she spoke very fervently but I could not understand her. Knowing that the time was passing fast, and fearing that something might turn up, I said to the gardener, who remained near the door, 'You will please look for something to convey this lady to the cottage.' On hearing this she made an effort to speak and we waited until she was a little more composed, and then she said with a little assistance she would try to walk, and to please not lose any time. 'Very well,' I replied, 'we will now gather all your belongings.' Making a sign to the wife, we soon filled a good sized trunk, asking her if there was anything else she wished to take. She answered that what belonged to her was in that room and she wished for nothing else. We next took charge of her, wrapped her up as comfortably as possible, and the gardener having lifted the trunk to his shoulder declared he was ready to follow the ladies. Our march was very slow at first, but gradually the motion braced the young woman up and safely we arrived at the cottage. The kind hearted gardener's wife opened her best room and after she was comfortably put to rest we also retired. I could not think of laying down to sleep but quietly sat down at my desk, writing carefully everything I had witnessed. I wrote a letter to Madame Konrad, picturing to her the whole affair;

I also wrote to you, and then waiting patiently for the hour to send them off I fell into a reverie. A light knock at my door brought me back to my every-day life. I opened the door and the good woman told me her husband was ready if I had anything I wished him to do. 'Yes,' I said, 'I shall be very glad, and very thankful to him to have everything in readiness to start early to the villa, and I have a couple of letters to mail. How is the young woman?'

"'She is asleep, but every little while we hear a moan of anguish; it is a very restless sleep. Your wish is to start early; might it not be well to arouse her and ascertain if she is in a condition to undertake that journey?'

"'Yes, please attend to that while I——' before I finished she had already left the room.

"After a while she returned and shaking her head, she said: 'I hope my fear is not well grounded. She conceals her suffering and is determined to leave this place. She does not own that she is injured but says she would rather die on the way than remain here another day. I will go back to help to dress her,' and hurriedly she left again.

"When I went to the room the young woman was ready and her kind hearted assistant was telling her: 'You look lovely,' and placed the glass before her, but without taking a look she gently pushed the looking glass aside and in a hardly audible voice she said: 'I do not deserve the kind attention you are all bestowing on a wretched outcast!' The last words were spoken with a ring of deep anguish and again she broke out crying bitterly. Stepping up to her with as much calm as I could command, I asked her: 'Do you think you will be able to ride with me to the villa of Madame Konrad?' I noticed the deathly pallor of her beautiful face. She struggled to overcome her grief and said, while the tears rolled down her cheeks: 'I am ready to go anywhere with you. Oh! Miss! Would that fate had been less merciful with a wretch as I am, and that I had been picked up a corpse last night!'

"You may imagine, my good friend, how I felt, and knowing that whatever I would say could not soothe her I mastered my own feelings and simply replied: 'I consider myself fortunate to be able to be of service to you, and now we will partake of some breakfast and then start at once.' I helped her to her feet and we walked

slowly to the dining room, but the stirring event interfered with our appetites so that we hardly tasted anything.

"I now will close this letter and I will keep you posted, for I know you are interested in this sad affair. In a few minutes we will be on our way to the villa. Your sincere friend, Florence Durante."

It was quite dark when they took their seats in the vehicle. The young woman wore a thick veil over her face and her frequent sighing called Miss Florence's attention and a feverish haste to reach their destination took possession of her. As they were drawing near she cheerfully turned to her and said: "Take courage, my dear, look at the beautiful scenes, and there, at our right, you can see the outline of the haven of refuge for your troubled heart."

"Ah! Miss," cried out the poor creature with a convulsive quiver shaking her slender form, "are you sure that a stranger, a homeless and dishonored outcast, will be welcomed. Are there other women as merciful and humane as you are? Ah! me! I wish I were dead." Wringing her hands she wailed piteously.

As Miss Florence was ready to speak a lady and gentleman on horseback, who had emerged from the thick woods on their left, passed by them, and before they were aware they were close to the massive iron gate which, swinging slowly open, they readily perceived that their arrival was anticipated. A middle aged man with a benign countenance came forward and politely asked permission to conduct them to where they were to alight. Miss Florence's heart was beating fast and standing still for a moment she whispered encouraging words. At the beautiful entrance stood a lady gracefully waving her hand and inviting them into the house. As they were ready to ascend the steps the lady noticed how slow was the motion of the veiled lady, and running down and apologizing she removed the veil and she was startled as she gazed upon the deathly pale face. Their movements must have been watched from the inside, for as the lady and Miss Florence exchanged anxious glances the door opened and Madame Konrad appeared with a silver goblet full of fresh water.

"Oh, Madame!" began Miss Florence, but the lady, putting her forefinger to her lips, began to administer the water to the fainting girl, who revived sufficiently to be assisted to go to the room prepared for her. Madame Konrad surrounded the poor stranger

with every possible comfort, and turning to the lady who had assisted them, told her kindly to conduct Miss Florence to the library where she would join her in a moment. Away they went and soon Miss Florence was comfortably seated, her eyes wandering with admiring gaze at the rich collection of volumes filling the spacious room. Busts of prominent authors were placed in positions that seemed to suggest the idea that they enjoyed the intellectual atmosphere surrounding them. Miss Florence was remarking to the lady that this was an ideal place, when the door opened slowly and Mme. Konrad entered. The other lady withdrew and Florence rose to her feet. At a courteous sign from Madame she resumed her seat.

"Now, what I want to tell you is, that you have acted very wisely. The poor child's grief and sorrow are profound. Do you know what has been the real cause that led her astray?"

"I know very little," replied Florence, "but I firmly believe that as soon as she recovers she will of her own accord disclose the circumstances that caused her downfall. She has a frank disposition and from what I have overheard from the companions of her enemy she is not an adventuress, but the victim of a profligate."

"We will then wait as you suggest, and now, I will tell you, I have formed a plan, and if you accept it, I shall be very glad, and it is this: That if you are willing you can make your home here with us. You will have free access to the library and any other part of the building that will interest you. You will have opportunities to meet people of distinction concerning their literary career, and I feel sure it will be a great advantage to you. May I ask you what particular line of ideas you are going to treat of in your new book?"

Miss Florence's cheeks crimsoned with a deep flush, and with a visible movement of hesitation she said:

"It has not occurred to me before that the task I have undertaken may be too vast for one who has as yet seen so little of real life and whose experiences have been so limited, but, strange as it may seem, I am following an impelling force which I cannot resist, and by trusting in it the necessary material is furnished me. As I was listening to you a boundless horizon seemed to allure my thoughts, pointing to unconfined realms where appears the noblest and highest ideals!"

L. of C.

The young woman's eyes and countenance glowed with the enthusiasm of a developing genius. Madame listened with an approving smile, and after a pause she said:

"I will gladly listen to what your vivid imagination has produced, and this evening, being not engaged, I shall look for you in this same place. And now, I hear the dinner bell. We will go to the dining room. On our way we will stop and enquire how the child is."

Arriving at the door of the room Mme. Konrad rapped softly, the door was opened and in low whispers she was informed that the patient was resting very comfortably. They expressed much satisfaction and proceeded on their way. When they entered the dining room Florence was delighted. It showed elegance and taste and she was not a little surprised when she was introduced to the cook and the waitress. The cook, as filling one of the most important positions in the household, that of intelligently combining the necessary ingredients for building and renewing the physical structure, and the waitress, as her able assistant. Florence noticed their pleasing and modest appearance and their faultless manners. Mme. Konrad conversed with and treated them as equals and a perfect understanding and harmony existed between them which was entirely new to the observing girl. When the repast was finished the lady accompanied Florence to her room.

"I will leave you now," she said, "and will see you later in the library," and with a light step she left.

An air of great delight rested in the face of the young author as she found herself in the large room with large windows draped with fine lace curtains, the decoration of ceiling and walls so artistic, the exquisitely painted pictures, soft carpets, easy chairs and a handsomely carved writing desk and a splendid book case filled with volumes!

"Ah! what a difference!" she exclaimed. "My former humble, bare and cheerless room, and this elegant, tasteful and comfortable one. What a strong and inspiring influence it will exert upon my mind and life. Oh, how much easier under these pleasant surroundings will my congenial work appear. God bless this good and generous lady!"

It was this young woman's habit to carry her work with her wherever she went. She opened a good sized package and began to

carefully examine its contents and when the time arrived to appear at the library she took it with her. When she reached the door she heard strange voices and at that moment the lady opened the door and, plesantly inviting her in, she courteously introduced her to a lady and gentleman; but the unexpected presence of strangers embarrased her very perceptibly, and in a whispering tone she said:

"Madame Konrad, will you allow me to retire?"

"My dear Miss," replied the lady, "this lady and gentleman have read some of your writings and they are only too glad to become acquainted with you, and you will certainly feel stimulated to continue in your good work when you hear the opinions they have formed of your literary talent."

"Miss Florence," said Mrs. Gartener, "it is very charming for one so promising as you are to manifest that rare virtue, modesty. My husband and I have formed the opinion that you, by using your literary talent in the direction you have so far, will be instrumental in doing a great amount of good. It is the kind of mental food the world is hungering for. We shall consider it a favor if you will take us into your confidence, but if you prefer not to we shall certainly not insist."

Miss Florence thanked the lady for the kind words and the embarrassment and diffidence disappeared. Mr. Gartener also spoke encouragingly and soon the conversation became general.

"Will you allow me, Miss," said Mme. Konrad, pointing to the package on the table.

"If you think it worth while; but perhaps I had better explain first why and how my thoughts have taken this direction in my present work. Since my writings were published I am continually receiving literary matter. Among the many interesting things I have received I found two pamphlets which I read over and over, and every time my thoughts become so surcharged with views and ideas so entirely strange to anything I had ever conceived, I hardly dare mention it to you, it may seem so foolish."

"Please tell us," said the three listeners at once.

"I suppose you know as well, or perhaps better, than I do how the Europeans admire the greatest republican country in the world, a country with such great resources, its immense possibilities developed by a free, industrial and intelligent people; but the money power has created an era of corruption, aggregating it in a few

hands and the true and honest patriots feel the greatest anxiety for the safety of their country! These last sentences caused a great stir in my mind. It is certainly an alarming symptom, and see how clear it appears reading Phillips Thompson's plain expressions. 'This,' he says, 'is the question which now confronts the people of the American continent: Will the nation that defied kingly tyranny and overthrew the slave holding aristocracy tamely submit to see their institutions perverted, their blood-bought freedom destroyed and a system of the meanest and most hateful class-supremacy established upon its ruins?' Oh! what horrible visions of treachery, cunning and unscrupulous dealings appear before our mental eyes! What usurpation and defiance of the people's rights and liberties must precede the fall of a mighty nation! The perusal of a 'Free Thought' pamphlet served as another powerful stimulus to my mind. I will quote a few passages, viz: 'It is a historical fact that church dogmas have discouraged learning, antagonized science and retarded civilization. The church has instigated fear, invited persecution and encouraged war. It has been the prop of thrones, the friend of despotism and the enemy of liberty.' Many other strong statements could I mention which have caused my thoughts to enter into a new current, and, presumptious perhaps, on my part, I felt that the writing of this book might in some way, be it ever so feeble, contribute toward the uplifting and purifying of the social, economic and religious systems."

A quick exchange of glances and an intelligent nodding of heads indicated silent approval on the part of the listeners.

"You certainly have selected subjects, my dear," said Mme. Konrad, "that would be considered a great task by the ablest minds of our time, but I do not in the least doubt that your book will be instructive, interesting and a credit to a young modern author. Since you began to explain we could plainly see the broad scope of your ideas. Workers are needed on every hand for the task of reconstruction on a sound and scientific basis, and, I presume, Mr. and Mrs. Gartener, you realize, with me, how glad Mr. Ivanohe will be when he knows that we can add another able worker to the good sized list of bright champions."

"With the greatest pleasure will I notify him," said Mr. Gartener, "and if you do not know, Miss, I will tell you that Mr. Ivanohe is the guiding spirit of the great movement called the Brotherhood

of Reconstruction, whose ramifications are spreading over the civilized world."

Miss Florence's face beamed with gladness and she answered:

"It has been my good fortune to hear from Mr. Ivanohe and to meet his accomplished sister, who is an intimate friend of Miss Palmey, my beloved benefactress. She also gave me a letter he wrote to her, feeling sure that it would assist me in my task, which, I acknowledge, it has. His views are so far-reaching and all-embracing, his ideas in regard to the spiritual nature of man are so new, and, I must say, so life-giving, that I refer to them when at times I am threatened with discouragement or doubt."

It was the turn now of the three friends to express surprise and pleasure.

"It is no mere coincidence," exclaimed Mme. Konrad. "The right elements are being drawn together in a most remarkable manner. This short interview has sufficed to bring us in close relation, for I do not doubt that as soon as you acquaint yourself with the principles underlying this vast movement you will identify yourself with it."

"I will with my whole heart and soul," eagerly replied Miss Florence.

Mr. and Mrs. Gartener spoke words of hearty approval.

"And now," said Mr. Gartener, "taking into consideration the lateness of the hour and your fatiguing journey, we beg leave to retire."

Madame escorted them to the door, and, coming back, she said to Florence:

"You will find that couple to be very valuable friends. Tomorrow evening they will return and there will be quite a representation of people who have given many years of their lives to the investigation of subjects that agitate the world, and I am glad that you will hear from their lips the many wonderful discoveries made. Now, in regard to the poor child, you will do me a great favor to inform her of the plan I have in view, and I have explained to you. I believe that you can, better than any one else, prepare her to enter trustingly into her new path of life, and we shall all do our share in assisting you. Now we shall retire for the night."

Very early the next morning the young girl awoke her assist-

ant with a frightened scream, and, trembling like a leaf, she fell into her arms.

"You have been dreaming," said the lady soothingly. "You are all right. No harm can come to you. You see you are in a safe place," and she passed her hand caressingly over the girl's forehead, which was wet with perspiration. Holding her breath, and with a wild look in her eyes, she cried:

"Oh, God! I am persecuted."

"No, no, my poor frightened child, it was a dream. You are under the safe protection of the good Madame Konrad."

The mention of that name brought her to herself.

"Ah!" she exclaimed, as if being conscious of the situation, and unclasping the hands that held her affectionately, she threw herself on the bed, and, burying her face in the pillow she wept bitterly. Gradually the weeping ceased and once more her sorrow was forgotten in undisturbed slumber.

The opening of several doors announced to Florence the hour to rise from bed, and she did. As it was not very early her first thought was to go and see the young protege. When she stood at the door she heard a low conversation inside, and, knocking softly, the door was opened and the lady she had seen the day before courteously invited her in. She was glad to see the young woman looking so calm and resigned—a wonderful change, she thought. They held a pleasant conversation.

"And now," said Florence, "please tell us your name."

"Armida Foresti," said the other lady. "Is it not a pretty name?"

"Yes, it is," replied Florence. "After breakfast we will take a walk in this fine park and I will tell you many good things. You and I, Miss Foresti, are two lucky girls, let me assure you!"

"Miss Florence, you deserve it, but I!"

Her eyes quickly filled with tears.

"You? You, my poor friend, have been unfortunate, but the keenness with which you feel it is a guarantee that in the future you will be a model young woman. Now, it is the wish of Mme. Konrad that, if you are strong enough, we shall all take breakfast together." A cloud seemed to pass swiftly over the girl's face. "Do not feel alarmed, you will not meet many persons and you will soon learn to love the good lady with the tenderest affection. Do

you hear the bell? Now we will compose ourselves and appear like two young women who fully appreciate the great kindness that has so abundantly been showered upon us."

Arm in arm they went in the direction of the dining room. The door was half open and as Madame saw them coming she went toward them. Miss Armida, following a strong impulse, hurried to her and falling on her knees, clasped and kissed her outstretched hands. Madame Konrad lifted her up and speaking in tender, motherly accents, assured her of the extreme pleasure in seeing her strong and able to be with all the rest at the breakfast table. Her sympathetic expressions and affable manners worked like a charm on the over-wrought nerves of the poor girl. After breakfast the two young ladies walked out into the inviting, park-like garden. The morning was beautiful, the air was fragrant with the perfume of flowers and the singing and chirping of the songsters of nature filled their hearts with gladness.

"Oh! I feel so light and joyful," said Florence. "I could shout for joy. Look at the beauty spread before us!"

For a while they stood silent as if entranced, and then slowly they entered a shady path which led into a comforable chiosco. They sat down close to each other and Florence began:

"Now, my dear, I will tell you that it is the wish of Mme. Konrad that you accept this as your permanent home—(a gesture of surprise came from Miss Armida)—Please do not interrupt me, but take a friend's advice. Take the good things that come across your life; accept this offer, as I do, with a grateful heart."

"But what can I do? Remember I am nothing but a poor, obscure and ignorant peasant girl!"

"My dear, it is no disgrace to be poor, and you are not to blame if you have been kept in a state of ignorance. Here you will have the very best opportunities to develop and improve your mind and soul. Madame Konrad has a deep, perceptive mind, and she judges you to be very bright, and she is convinced that not wickedness, but a strong love for the beautiful things has been the cause for your taking the wrong steps. Pardon me for making allusion to it."

"Did she really say that?" exclaimed Armida, her eyes widely dilated with surprise. "I must tell you my past."

"I would like to have you relate it in the presence of our good lady, and now let us go around for a little while."

And so they did, and then returned to their rooms. About an hour later Florence went to see Armida and informed her that the lady would receive them in the library about 2 o'clock. At luncheon she was treated with the same cordiality and at 2 Mme. Konrad and her two protegees were seated in the library. In spite of the effort Armida made to be calm she was again restless. She had promised Florence to relate her past that afternoon. The lady noticed it and she said:

"If it makes you feel uncomfortable to mention anything of your past, let us talk of something else; let the distressing thoughts be banished and your mind be filled with joy and peace."

The tender tone and words touched the girl's troubled heart and big tears began to fill her eyes.

"No—my—good—lady—you—have a right—to—know—who—I am—excuse—my—weakness," she said, unable to control her weeping.

Florence arose and went to her, saying:

"Perhaps you would prefer to put it off for some other time."

CHAPTER IX.

"No, I will be all right in a little while. It is not much I have to say. My parents are very poor and hard workers. I am the only child, and whether it is the unceasing hard labor or that they do not care for me, as far as I can remember I have always felt like a solitary being. I also had to work hard in the fields, attend to the cattle in the pasture, and you probably know what a peasant's life means. One day I had to climb up a winding path where one of the goats had disappeared. When I reached the top I stood a while looking around in all directions, when I beheld a young man whose eyes were fixed upon me. The steady gaze produced a sensation like a quiver running from head to foot. I saw him twice at a distance watching me. A sense of great uneasiness crept over me every time I ventured out of doors, but of course nearly all my work was to be done outside. One fine morning I was sent to a hilly place to pick a certain kind of green plants that grow close to hedges. The ground was divided in little plateaux and held in place by rough stone walls. On the summit of the hill was a fine road. The day was beautiful and nature appeared in her most glorious mood. I arose from my stooping position and began to survey the lovely landscape, and in the delight of my grateful soul I lifted my eyes to the sky——but ——great heavens! Upon what did my eyes stare? Away up on top of the hill stood the young man! I felt as if I had received a severe blow and ran toward home, almost flying for fear of meeting him. It was no more than two days later when, returning home from the field, I saw him again on an elevated position looking at me through something I learned afterwards was a field glass. My first impulse was to make a hasty retreat, but there was no possible escape. I pulled over my face my handkerchief and hid myself from his view. How long I remained in that position I do not know, but when I dared to look up he was gone. These experiences continued for some time and they only served to intensify the fear which had taken control of me, his appearance would always be so sudden and in places so unlooked for. One day I was sent to a

neighboring village to carry some of the products we were indebted to a friend. We were living in a valley and to reach the other place we had to go up a high tower and from that tower we reached the main road. I arrived safely at my destination and enjoyed very much the long walk and was nearing the tower on my return home feeling very glad that no unpleasant incident had marred my little journey, but as I drew nearer to the arched entrance of the tower an uneasy feeling crept over me. I went down a few turns of steps, and, frightened, not knowing the reason why, I ran up again into the open air and then felt ashamed of my childish fears. Mustering courage, looking all around, listening intently, I tried to convince myself that the way was clear and I ran down the stairs at great speed, thinking of nothing else but to get out of the prison-like tower. Suddenly I heard someone rush down with the speed of lightning. I cannot explain to you how I felt. Dread and fear set my whole frame a-trembling. I was panting for breath and withdrew into one of the corners to get out of the way of whomsoever was flying down stairs in that way, but he——he did not rush past me, but rushed upon me and held me almost fainting in his arms. I was like one paralyzed. I could see nothing but the burning fire in his eyes. I could not move nor scream. He drew his lips close to my ear and in a commanding tone said: 'You must meet me in the chestnut grove near the village tomorrow morning early.' Hastily he looked around. 'Ah! some one!—You must!' he repeated and then released me. As the noise came from below he flew up stairs. With the greatest effort I succeeded in regaining my strength and slowly began to descend the steps. The noise from below drew nearer and when I heard the thumping of a cane on the stone steps I knew it was the decrepit old man known in the village as Uncle Bernard. In my perturbed condition I felt greatly relieved, but the command that I had to meet that stranger in that lonely spot kept constantly ringing in my ears, and I seemed to have no will power to resist it. I was simply hypnotized. Of course, at that time I knew nothing of it. So, the next morning I was at the grove, and I felt as if nailed to the spot. He was there and quickly came toward me, but the same sense of fear seized me and I succeeded in turning around and was ready to run when he stood still and again I was compelled to face him. I could not sustain the look in his eyes. He took another step and again I shrank back. 'I must go now,' he said, 'but

you must come again tomorrow at the same time.' I shook my head. 'But you must! I must see you. Do you know that you are extremely lovely?' Quickly turning the corner he disappeared. I did all in my power to free my thoughts from what had happened but in vain. I made a strong resolution not to go to the grove but the next day, in spite of my firm resolve, all power of resistance availed nothing, and there I was again, and he was at his post. This time he paid no attention to my embarrassment. He advanced rapidly, took hold of my right hand and slipped a beautiful ring on my finger, impressed a kiss on my hand and triumphantly said: 'You will come again tomorrow.' My perturbation was great but I noticed the furtive glances he cast around. Apparently he was afraid of something, and again he left. I wish my parents had not been so indifferent. I had full freedom to roam where I wanted and do what I wanted if I did my share of work. I reached home as usual, unobserved by them, and went into my room to examine the ring. How it flashed and sparkled; its brilliant, precious gems fascinated me. The following day I went to meet the young man as if I was impelled by the same power I could not resist. He had come half way and was sitting under a large tree and when he saw me he jumped up and quickly stood before me, holding in his hands a package, and said: 'My dear, take this. I will be gone for one week and when I return I know we will be better friends.' He pressed it into my hand, kissed me and before I was aware he was gone. I went home and when in my room opened the package and saw a number of dainty articles in silk and fine lace. My eyes feasted on those beautiful things. My room was so bare and ugly that when I took my eyes from those handsome things the contrast was painful. Every chance I had during the week I would go into my room and pass in review, touch and admire the lovely things, feel the fine textures, for my hands had never touched anything but the coarse home-spun goods. I spent the time like one in a dream and the days passed rapidly, and, strange enough, at the appointed time I was approaching the large tree, where "he" stood, and said: 'I knew you were coming. Now, listen. Come with me; I am rich. Come with me to a grand city. You are too beautiful to live in a rough place like this. You shall have fine clothes like a fine lady.' He was talking fast and quickly took hold of my hand, holding it very tight in his. I looked into his eyes and I felt as if they pierced me through and through.

'Now, promise me to be good, and listen. I am going to start to the city and you must accompany me. Now, don't say no! I will have a carriage in readiness at 8 o'clock this evening which will take you to the station, where I will meet you. You cannot, and you must not, cross my wishes. I know you will be there at the appointed time; I know it!' In a low but commanding tone he said: 'Look at me!' Our eyes met and a peculiar sensation crept over me, and he said: 'I know you will not disappoint me,' and again he disappeared in the usual direction. I am not able to describe how I felt after that interview; his commanding sentences were sounding incessantly in my ears. As I was returning home, my mind filled with strange thoughts, seemed as if I could hear him repeat, 'you shall have fine clothes like a fine lady.' At the same time there appeared before my eyes what did not seem earthly to me, the vision was so lovely,—three young girls and two ladies, their garments so gorgeous I remember I could not take my eyes from them. I had never seen such handsomely dressed ladies. Of course they were strangers and the last time I saw them was in the church and I assure you they looked to me like fairies! It was the first time, so everybody said, that such visitors ever appeared in that part of the country. How I spent that day is even now a mystery to me, and at the appointed time I appeared at the place where stood the carriage. When I stood near it the door opened and a lady came out of it and led me by the hand. I did everything that was asked of me and when seated inside the door was closed and off we went. When we arrived at the station the lady said, 'I will take you where you will change your garments and be ready for the journey.' She led me into a hotel where we entered a room—oh such a room! The lights were wonderful to me, who had never seen anything but tallow candles and smoky lamps. And the beautiful mirrors. Oh! how everything was so new! Upon the bed lay a fine traveling suit. 'I will assist you,' said the lady, but the spell seemed to be wearing off and I was beginning to feel like one awakening from a dream. I asked her: 'Where am I?' 'You are at the hotel,' she answered, 'and we must hurry. The train will soon start.' I was so dazzled I could not understand the situation, and she handled me so easily that before I was aware she put me in front of one of the large mirrors and exclaimed: 'Well, well! Who would believe that you are the same girl?' My mind was not clear and at that moment we heard a knock and, without waiting,

the door opened and the young man hastily advanced toward me. I shrank from him with a loud cry. He turned to the lady, said something to her, and left the room. She approached me and coaxingly tried to have me put on my gloves. 'I want to go home,' I said in a loud voice which must have been heard outside, for the door opened again and the young man rushed in. 'Now, do not act foolish,' he said, trying to take hold of my hand. I was then thoroughly aroused. 'Do not touch me,' I said. He fiercely gazed into my eyes but my determination must have in some unaccountable way counteracted the peculiar power he had exerted over me and absolutely I refused to obey him. He looked helplessly at the woman. She came to me and in the most insinuating manner said: 'That fine gentleman wishes to make you his wife. You have come thus far, now you are surely not going to cause him trouble. Be reasonable, or your behavior will attract public attention and cause you much trouble. He is your friend, and as his wife you are certainly to be envied. Do you hear? There is the train.' From every direction in the hotel people were rushing out, everybody in a big hurry, and in the midst of the big crowd I was carried along, the woman having hold of my arm and the young man following close. I had no chance to say another word and was almost lifted into the coach, but as soon as I discovered that the woman was gone I made a desperate effort to escape but the young man grasped me violently and hissed into my ear: 'If you do not behave I will have you arrested and exposed as a bad woman!' The fearful earnestness with which the words were spoken caused a cold chill to run through me. He forced me to sit down and for a long time I remained as if motionless. Oh! how wretched I felt! This is the history of my past. I never knew a moment of happiness. Again and again I urged him to fulfill his promise, but it made him furious. I was nothing to him but a pretty toy; how could an ignorant peasant girl aspire to become the wife of a distinguished and wealthy nobleman? I had made many plans to escape from that life but they were frustrated by him. His dissipated life frightened me. My misery reached the climax the night that in my despair I jumped out of the window. Why my wretched life was saved I do not not know."

"My good young woman," said Madame Konrad, kindly, "you will bury the past and start life anew. You are endowed by nature with excellent qualities which shall be carefully developed and you will

become a very useful member of society—the right kind of society—and in doing good you will find the greatest joy and peace. I know we will understand each other perfectly. After you are thoroughly rested you will find everything in order to begin the necessary studies. This evening we will have a number of ladies and gentlemen who are studying the causes of the great confusion and turmoil which destroy human happiness in this beautiful world. If you feel disposed to come and listen to their new and good ideas, I shall be very glad. And now, it will perhaps be well for you to retire and take a good rest, and I suppose that you, Miss Florence, have a good deal to do, and you can remain in the library where you will find everything necessary."

It was a remarkable assembly of ladies and gentlemen to whom were introduced the two young girls that evening, and what they heard they did admit was something very new to them. One of the guests, having been requested by the hostess to touch upon his favorite themes for the benefit of the young author and her friend, arose to his feet, and as an introduction, he took a rapid retrospection, as it were, of the road the human race had traveled. He described in the most stirring word pictures the frantic attempts made in pursuing the ever alluring and ever vanishing chimeras called worldly happiness, and continuing said:

"Mankind has been taught from childhood to feed their minds with the kind of food which, instead of building them up, has hopelessly—almost—hopelessly deformed their being. It was not surprising that, with teachings and examples so diametrically opposed to truth and wisdom humanity has suffered such great calamities! Consider to what degree of excellency will the human family rise when it fully understands that the possibilities for its development are boundless! Think how quick the old traditions will crumble to dust and the race will obtain its glorious inheritance! The cruel attempts of the few in all ages to gain dominion over mankind has kept the world in a low condition and prevented the solemn union of the human family. Now the time has come to uncover all the evils, not to injure any one, but to open their eyes. Then everybody will see that wealth, worldly fame and ambitious cliques—success in these worldly errors—brings not only discord and suffering to the seekers but to the whole race! Implacable enemies to the highest good of the people have always been those who have unfurled their blood-stained stand-

ards over the nations. They were the world's monarchs and the adherents and supporters of the thrones! When true heroes arose with lofty views advanced thoughts and ideas they were persecuted and exiled. Arrogance and extravagance on one side, and submission and neglect on the other. Is it possible to elevate mankind under such destroying influences? ["Impossible, impossible!" answered every one in the assembly.] From every part of the world we hear how the appearance of millionaires creates a condition to produce paupers and tramps. How newspapers are paid for suppressing the truth; how in some places the preachers are paid twenty-five thousand dollars a year to dodge the devil and tickle the ears of the wealthy; how girls who go wrong are made outcasts and the males flourish as gentlemen. How very unjust to pay $15,000 dollars for a dog and to pay a poor woman fifteen cents for making a dozen shirts! The money power has become a gigantic power, not to benefit but to degenerate mankind! With the destroying power of sword and cannon the monarchs have gained possession of nations but could those destroyers have carried on their work without the support of capital? Certainly not. Let us read history and we shall learn how these arbitrary authorities could not exist the one without the other. We are taught that 'money is the root of all evil.' Have we not discovered the truth of it yet? Has it not been sufficiently proven that capital is the cause of wars? That capitalists bribe legislatures and juries? That capitalists sneer at justice and despise the truly noble and worthy inhabitants of the world, which are the working people, and call for the strong militia to shoot them down if they do not submit to their unjust demands which cause oppression and suffering? The great Reconstructive Movement is carrying on an enormous amount of work to enlighten and prepare the people to prevent the threatening bloody revolution, but there should be no wonder if at times it becomes a little scared when it sees and hears that the Destructive Movement boasts of being far ahead; that it sees clearer than any other movement that the world is diseased, and it repeats what other revolutionists have said, that 'only by drawing out the bad blood can its health be restored,' and with an infuriated chase after plutocracy and aristocracy it will create an awful reign of terror, another bloody, fratricidal strife, for, are we not all brothers? They stir up the people's minds by telling them great truths—that this is the age of progress and advancement, that everything is hastening

on to perfection in the sciences and the arts, and that only through the obstinacy of the domineering class is the great human family prevented from obtaining their stupendous and Divine Rights! Can mankind, they repeat again and again, become conscious of their glorious possibilities as long as their enemies support and maintain the present system, and do not allow them to become free from every form of bondage? By this barbaric system do they not prevent them from working out their own salvation? My good friends, I know you will admit that the Destructive Movement presents many great truths, but their remedies—God deliver us from them—will accomplish nothing but renew what other terrorists have done in the past, lay down the countries, destroyed and bleeding, at their feet!

"Oh! how often we hear that the public is to blame for all the existing evils; that if it would disapprove them they would be abolished and everything degrading would be eliminated from the earth. I say, and every true reformer will agree, that whosoever blames the public are either the public's enemies or superficial observers. Do we not know that the 'self-established authorities' denied the freedom of thought and the sublimest convictions of the Saviors of the world who were willing to sacrifice their lives in order to elevate the minds of the public? How can the public disapprove the evils when it is denied the necessary enlightenment of the mind in order to distinguish the good from the evil? One of the most abominable and destructive powers on earth has always been despotism! That has always been, and is today, the source and foundation of the social system which prevents the human family from understanding the meaning of that lovely and saving sentence which is: 'The Fatherhood of God and the Brotherhood of Men!' This is one of the principles which fills the souls of the members of the Reconstructive Movement with the undying brotherly love which makes them discern how today the money power rules the world and which produces so many paupers and criminals, and, therefore, seeing the extreme necessity of appealing to human intelligence and morality, they are carrying on a wonderfully reformatory work. They know that to raise the human family to a superior condition they must have superior environments. We hear that some reformers say: 'We can reach out for purer air and more sunlight by declining to live in dark and dingy places,' and we say, yes, when the Reconstructive Movement shall take the place of the present competitive system. They tell the public to keep the

blood purer and healthier which is necessary for the proper support and functioning of the body; how necessary it is to set apart from one-half to one hour daily for intelligent physical exercise, sufficient to strengthen and keep in good order all the bones, tendons, ligaments, nerves, muscles and cartilages of the body, and train the lungs to take in a greater quantity of pure, wholesome air than is done now; that many, very many, men and women of our time are only half alive; that they have but a very imperfect control over the body and its functions because of lack of knowledge. They tell the people that they must learn what injurious chemical changes are produced in the body by anger, worry, envy, hatred and jealousy. Good heavens! I must exclaim again and again, how can the great masses of the people obtain all these good things under the present system? If those reformers sincerely desire to raise the human family to that superior condition, let them, in the name of God, understand that they must have superior environments! I would like to ask those reformers if they really keep posted and informed of what is going on in the world. If they do not they are not reformers and I wish that among so many other facts they would read 'A Doctor's View,' which is a vivid chronicle, as it is stated, of the times in which we live. In part he says: 'It stands that corporations have no souls. Compress a corporation into two or three individuals and it is found that these have less of soul than pertains to even a larger corporation. When the functions of a corporation have been converged into a single individual, he is certain to become a heartless monster—a cold blooded beast of prey.' This is brutally exemplified in that most atrocious form of slavery—child labor. Now, we know all about the pitiful condition of the people on this part of the world, and what increases our anxiety is when we read of the cruel method of murder for money which is carried on in a great republic on the new continent! Is it not plain enough that under the present system no country on earth can be saved from the unjust and oppressive powers? In factories, we are informed, children from the age of eight or nine to fifteen are forced to toil from ten to sixteen hours a day. All these hours their developing nervous systems are racked and torn by the num and grind and racket of machinery and their tender lungs are saturated with lint and dust. That not more than one in ten of them ever reach maturity. That utterly robbed of the necessary privilege of play, the benefits of school and social oppor-

tunities, they become old and withered before they reach their teens. An authoritative writer who has personally investigated the subject, says that four out of five of these children die within five years after having entered the service. Oh! my good friends, we do not approve but condemn the remedies presented by the Destructive Movement, but what are we to think of the other reformers who—perhaps not knowing better—are causing so great a hindrance to the progressive march of the human race? Would the hearts of the reformers who tell the public to keep the blood purer and healthier not be moved, and would they not willingly try, as does the Reconstructive Movement, to make it possible for the people to live a more perfect life? Is it possible that reformers of any kind, if they are really reformers, and sincerely investigate and become convinced that the injurious chemical changes produced in the body are a natural result of the wrong system under which we are living, would they not be more than willing to adopt the principles of a movement which alone can reconstruct the social system on a scientific, humanitarian, and, therefore, a perfect basis? Can the most useful class on this globe—the working class—be free from worry, and what is worse, anger and hatred, when cruelly treated as they are? Do we not hear how large masses of the useful toilers—the miners, for instance—are not sufficiently protected by their employers, and from medical testimony we know that a large number of cases in their practice are toilers burned by powder and oil explosions? How they generally find pieces of coal driven into their bodies, and many other injuries caused by falling roofs where the victims sustained even broken backs! If sufficient protection were given them, the doctor says, it would prevent such accidents, and the poor victims, although willing to pay the doctor's bills, cannot, as their wages are not sufficient to enable them to live! ["Oh! the horrible system," exclaimed many in the assembly.] It is horrible, for they are treated by their fellow beings, as one paper says, worse than a herd of swine! The ambulance service, declared the doctor, is simply terrible. Those vehicles are kept in the mule stables and every ambulance in the great region is a mass of infection, bringing disease and death to those carried in them. If all the reformers were really in touch with the great, great mass of the working people they would soon show the finest examples of their unselfishness and join the glorious Reconstructive Movement! Think, my good friends, how a new earth will appear when its saving principles

will be put into practice; when paupers, the shadows of the millionaires not only, but the idlers belonging to that class as well, will have to disappear; when all the good things needed and belonging to every human being will be equally distributed. No longer will the few oppress the many, but, on the basis of love and justice, will triumph the spirit of good will and universal brotherhood! The Reconstructive Movement plainly shows that selfishness has induced the few to take possession of the means of the people's livelihood, and, not satisfied with that important part, in order to maintain their unjust power, they are determined to control the government, the press, the pulpit and the schools, and reduce the large human family to a state of intellectual, physical and social inferiority—a state of abominable slavery!

"I will recite a poem written by Maude Abbey, entitled, 'Contrasts.' You know, we receive papers from every country.

THE USELESS.

An emperor sat in a sumptuous room
'Neath the chandelier's mellow glow,
While close drawn curtains of richest weave
Shut out the frost and snow.
The fragrant air is warm and still;
Rare pictures adorn the walls;
Priceless statues and works of art
Enrich the marble halls.
His hands, so slender, small and white,
No useful toil have known;
Sheltered by those whose craven hearts
Fear the shadow of a throne—
The shadow that has held the race
For ages 'neath its ban,
The emblem of a dying creed—
The rule of man by man.

THE USEFUL.

The factory girl, as night comes down,
Turns home with weary feet;
Her frail form cowers and shrinks in vain
From the pitiless wind and sleet.
The room is dark, the fire is out,
Her friends are far away;
The rent is due, and so she spends
The pittance she earned today.
The rent must come. From the cruel street
She shrinks with a nameless dread.
For food and fuel she needs must wait,
She supperless goes to bed.
In the darkness of that cheerless room,
A life is wrecked tonight.
With breaking heart she sells herself
For a little warmth and light.
Which is worth the most, the useless king,
Surrounded by wealth untold,
This relic of an outgrown past,
Or the maiden's pure, white soul?
Armies and navies, kingdoms and powers,
With their tinsel and trumpet blare,
Are not worth one throb of the girl's pure heart
Ere it broke in wild despair!

"We know that the air is present everywhere and that every living being has the right to breathe it, and without it it is impossible to exist. It is given by the creator free to all. It is exhaustless, and some tell us as a great truth that we ought to be thankful that the air is for us, and for all! We know that food, clothes and shelter are as necessary for our existence as is the air, and the Wise Creator has given free to all the mother earth, which He fills with the necessary life to produce the food and everything needed by human and other living creatures. Now, then, is it right, is it the will, and can it be approved by the Wise Creator, that the mother earth,

which is as indispensable and necessary for existence as is the air, shall be controlled and owned by a few? We hear the true and consoling sentences that 'Nature is so kind, so beautiful and so good.' The

'Rich, apple-blossomed earth'

is sufficient to all. But we all know that man, who is greedy and mean and stingy, has caused in the past, and is causing at present, the wrong conditions on the beautiful earth! There is no exaggeration. You will admit that it is only the plain truth that today, as in the past, as the true reformers point clearly out 'The economic interests of the capitalist class dominate the entire social system, the lives of the working class—the useful class—are recklessly sacrificed for profit; that they foment wars between nations, and the destruction of whole races is sanctioned in order that the capitalists may extend their commercial dominion abroad and have their supremacy at home!' Is it right, my good friends?"

"It is wrong, wrong and sad!" replied the audience.

"It is wrong, wrong and sad," repeated the speaker, "but let our souls be filled with confidence and let us trust in the power of the Wise Creator that the principles of the Reconstructive Movement will illumine the minds of the capitalists and when converted and strong enough to enter into the right path they will honestly and sincerely admit what the true brotherhood claims: That there will be capital but no capitalists; workers, but no wage workers; masters, but each one will be master of himself; servants, each serving all and all serving each on the basis of equality and in the spirit of brotherhood and good will. That there will be no neglect of science and art and literature and useful knowledge. That no scientific genius will be buried in the slums, for slums will disappear; no artistic longings smothered in sweat shops, for they also shall be abolished. That the genius of the race will expand and grow because universal service will make it possible. Every individual will perform the work for which he or she is naturally fitted and machinery will be used to lighten labor and increase the comforts of all the producers of the useful and beautiful things, and when the mother earth shall be as free for the benefit of all, as the omnipresent and indispensable air, then labor will be as pleasant and as necessary as is the breathing of the pure atmosphere. The Reconstructive movement is calling the world's attention to the great necessity of

appealing to and enlightening women; it understands the meaning of the ancient symbol that 'through woman the world fell, and through woman it shall be redeemed.' No permanent change for the better can be expected unless every bondage and shackle which from time immemorial have been forged to produce the mental stagnation in that portion of the human family from which depends in the largest measure the destiny of the race, are broken! Who will reap the benefits, the treasures of the unfoldment of woman's physical, intellectual and spiritual attributes? The human race, the human family, my friends! We already have a great proof. Think and rejoice how much good have already accomplished the women in the great republic across the Atlantic ocean. Did they wait for men to set them free? No! Like heroines called forth by the twentieth century they have almost single handed battered down the hoary and rugged battlements erected and cemented by the most tenacious and unyielding materials, intolerance, prejudice and tyranny! Again and again we are told by the best thinkers that nothing gives greater promise and assurance for the future than the fact that women are achieving physical, intellectual and spiritual liberty. With their illustrious minds and hearts they will defend the innocent; full of benevolence toward every human being, they will be the great helpers to fill the world with peace and harmony; they will be useful and faithful in performing the duties necessary to bring the blessed renewal of the present state of affairs."

The closing sentences were spoken with so great intensity of feeling that every one present was thrilled with a sweet fascination. For a little while after the speaker had taken his seat Miss Florence retained her intently listening position, then slowly she arose and said:

"Allow me to express to you my deeply felt gratitude for the privilege of listening to your very instructive speech. I cannot explain what I have gained in any other way than by saying that a new horizon appears in my inner vision. The mist, that at times would obscure some of the most brilliant flights of the imagination has vanished. A heretofore unknown trust and strength arises within me. Every word you have spoken I shall treasure in my heart. They contain volumes of suggestions from which to draw ever new and great ideals. Again, please accept my best thanks."

The gentleman politely arose and bowed, saying he felt honored

and happy at the hearty appreciation of his weak effort. Several of the other guests spoke and the meeting was declared very instructive, attractive and useful. When the assembly retired Florence and Armida walked together to their rooms, their minds seemed so filled with the many new ideas that their eyes apparently expressed more than words could have done if loudly spoken. They silently held each other's hands and whispering good night and with a friendly grasp, they retired.

When Florence entered her room her first thought was to write a letter to her friend Ernestine. In glowing terms she described every experience since they left the gardener's home and also wrote the history as given by the young girl. She looked at her watch and in a rather loud voice said: "It does not matter how late it is, I must write to my good friend. It is to her I owe the happiest moments of my life. How happy she will be when she positively knows that this dear girl has found a refuge and is protected from a world which could have had nothing to offer her but a life of shame."

CHAPTER X.

The next morning when they assembled in the dining room Mme Konrad congratulated the two young girls, as they appeared so charming and fresh looking.

"I feel so happy," said Florence. "My soul is still permeated with the aroma of life which emanated from the new and good ideas so vividly expressed by the gentleman and your other guests last evening. Tell the lady how you feel, Armida, you can say much in a simple sentence."

Armida's face turned into a crimson color as she looked at the good lady, who was kindly smiling. She overcame the embarrassment, and although a little timid looking, she said:

"My generous benefactress, the change in my life is so great, everything is so entirely new to me, that I feel as if I am in a new world! It seems almost too good to be true. Oh, my good madame, I do not deserve so much happiness!"

"Yes, you do," quickly replied Mme. Konrad, "and everybody else does, and everybody will be happy when we shall have the new social order of which you gained some good ideas last evening, and remember the important mission which is devolving upon women if human happiness is to appear in its reality."

"What a glorious mission," exclaimed Florence, clasping her hands enthusiastically together. "Will you kindly permit me to see you this afternoon?"

"I shall be glad to have you come to the library at half past two, and if that interview will benefit Armida, bring her with you."

"Thank you," said both girls at once.

At the appointed hour the two girls were in the library. Mme. Konrad opened the conversation by complimenting Armida for the rapid progress she was making in her studies and the pleasant feeling she experienced in receiving the favorable report from her teachers. "Do not look embarrassed, my dear, that is just as it should be, and now, I will listen to you, Miss Florence."

"I would not dare to broach this subject," said Florence, "if it

were not that I am convinced that there is something for me—or us." she said, glancing at Armida, "to learn. Pardon me if I come straight to the point. It has surprised me and continually causes me to reflect a great deal about the manner in which you deal with your—may I say—servants."

Pleasantly smiling Mme. Konrad said: "No, not servants, but co-workers. I am glad that your attention has been drawn to this important phase of our life. We are living under a system that is not natural, and therefore radically unjust. You have experienced the bitter task of earning a living as a domestic servant. In the first place, it was not your natural vocation, and that is the case with numberless thousands, but there is at present a very hopeful sign, and that is, that the more women gain independence of spirit through broad and extensive knowledge, the more difficult becomes the so-called servant question. Their independent spirit rebels at the idea that they must wear the livery of inferiority, and that is right; but you will notice how the press calls the mistresses' attention that the livery of inferiority—the cap and apron —must be arranged to be worn from the very first, or there will be opposition to it, and trouble. Men and women engaged in the great reform movement advocate a radical change in this, as in every other present social arrangement. They do not believe in dividing the human family into classes. They believe in establishing justice, pure and simple, so that all will have the same rights, based on the immortal principles of the 'Fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man,' which will cleanse the world from the parasites and non-producers who are feeding on the hard toil of the helpless producers.

"In this old continent social classes have been and are founded on aristocratic lines, pretending to be nobler and superior beings, having established through cruel and bloody conquests forms of hereditary government. In the new continent social classes are appearing, claiming superiority because founded upon great wealth. The stronger factors in that unholy arrangement, if you pierce under the surface you will discover, are women. The reformers in that part of the world see clearly that their unbridled ambition causes them to barter in wedlock. The millions, the piles of wealth extorted from the wealth producers of their country, they unblushingly barter for empty title of nobility. It is sad and dangerous

that the daughters of the great American patriots are disgracing themselves and humiliating a country that ought to be held up high for having freed itself from the useless and parasitical class and thereby restrained the passions and crimes of the monarchs of the earth in their blessed land. The system I have adopted works very harmoniously, as you have noticed. Every assistant I need is not considered an inferior being, and therefore they take interest in their share of work, and every kind of the work is considered respectable, because useful, and our inspiration is to seek our own in the happiness of others. Immortals, as we all are, we are one family. The present unequal and unjust social arrangement produces a discordant, a false brotherhood. It is no easy task to emerge from the crude ideas and forms which the human race has held to for so many generations. Our strength and enlightenment comes through the faithful study of the true origin of our being, and the clearer the realization of this Divine Truth the easier do we find the fulfilment of the golden rule, and the plainer appears our dependence upon one another. I think you can see how the harmonious blending of the different activities in this household. The idea of master and servant is abolished and that of mutual helpfulness is substituted."

"I understand," said Florence, "but do you think the world is ready to receive, to accept ideas so new and so opposed to the 'established order of things?"

"The world is accepting them as fast as it can. The beauty and beneficial effects of these ideas are attracting much attention, even among some of those steeped in worldliness, their ceaseless strifes are their own created tormentors; and growing weary, they sigh for something better. They cannot help themselves in these degenerate days unless women change their wrong ideals of life. Modern science has made the useful discovery that women are far more aristocratic, exclusive, proud and fond of display than men; more craving for stylish surroundings, fashionable and gorgeous dresses, that it matters them less how smart they are but mainly how stylish they dress, which creates in them intrigues and deceptions, and becoming a lady in that manner means unbecoming a woman, because composed of shams, pretences and artificialities—which no true woman can practice—for women require virtue most if the race is expected to be virtuous. If women overcome the cor-

ruptive passion of luxury, then be sure that the greedy millionaires will disappear, then the flowers of the noblest sentiments will ornament the earth and there will no longer exist the division of the human family—it can no longer exist, because then every one will understand that the real treasures are the virtuous actions and the most delightful feelings are to do good and help one another, and then will the biologists' claims be verified—that is, that the physical frame of man is such that his natural life should be about 100 years, and that he should be in his prime at 60, while woman should have the flush of youth at 45 that she now has at 20. Understanding the important laws of nature we shall know that mental worry, envy, idleness or overwork makes everybody old before their time, and you will hear how the great reform movement will adjust everything and place the people under the best and most natural conditions, and then will the human race be regenerated, and how much lovlier, better and happier it will be! Now, you two are both apt scholars and you will greatly profit by these excellent opportunities, which will increase daily your desire to see every one of our fellow beings blessed as you are, and it will induce you to become ardent workers in the Reconstructive Movement."

The two girls felt the good effects produced in their minds and hearts by the wise counsels of the cultured lady, and heartily thanking her, said they did not wish to take any more of her valuable time, and the lady replied that although her time was valuable, she felt it could not be put to a better use than in exchanging thoughts and ideas that had a bearing upon questions and measures which could never be solved except through honest and impartial reasoning, and nodding a friendly au revoir she escorted them to the door, and, light hearted and happy, they entered their rooms and took up their different tasks.

In the meantime Ernestine had received Florence's letter, and also one from her mother. "How lucky," she said to herself, "this is our meeting night. But who can explain this mystery? From this letter, coming from my mother, I receive a sensation which, if I should act upon it, I would lay it aside and never look at it again, while the feeling I experience from the contact of this other one I seem compelled to open it at once." In passing by her friend's

room she rapped lightly at the door, and at the invitation from within to come in, she said:

"I will come earlier than usual. I have two good sized letters."

"And I have one from Ivanohe."

"Good," said Ernestine, "were it not for my task I would come in for a few minutes, but must go to work," and away she skipped to her room.

Early in the evening the two studious girls sat at the center table. Ernestine holding the two and Olga her brother's letters in their hands.

"If I had my way," said Ivanohe's sister, "I would read your mother's letter first."

"Very well," replied Ernestine. She opened the letter and "Oh." she said, "A photograph! Who is this lady, I wonder?"

She handed it to Olga while she began to read the letter. It contained nothing of much interest to the girls. It was mostly an enthusiastic description of the endless gaieties of social life, and the minutest details of elegant dresses and jewels.

"Oh! how I wish," wrote the mother, "you had seen the magnificent garment worn by Mrs. A. W. Think of the lace flounces alone costing eleven thousand dollars; the drapings of sleeves and corsage amounting to five thousand, and a costume representing the value of $150.000. I tell you it was enough to turn a jealous person green with envy! You may depend upon it, that lady makes a mark. I often wish you were through with your studies. Your father is growing wonderfully prosperous, and who could appear with more eclat than our only daughter? Of late, when everybody seems to have a mania to eclipse and out-do one another, I can hardly restrain my desire to put a stop to your foolish inclination. For what do you crave so much learning, anyway? It is all time wasted! In the elegant society to which you are now entitled brain does not count for much. I am getting very impatient. There seem to be no kind thoughts for your foolishness in exiling yourself from a life replete with such variety of pleasures. Many of the most prominent and influential people insinuate freely that they would not allow you to indulge, as we do, but of course the people do not know everything that exists in a family. You would not be where you are were it not for the peculiarity—which I hope you are rid of by this time—

which made your father so uneasy. Of course, not for anything in the world would I mention it to any living being. I dare not mention anything which alludes to it to your father. It casts a dark shadow over him, and this is the only reason why I patiently wait for you to finish your course. I am sure you will make up for the time lost when you return. I tell you that money moves the world. We are having imposing and entirely novel ceremonies, attended by the most exclusive and fashionable elements of society. We have coronations performed with the pomp and splendor equal to any court in European monarchies. You may well imagine the food for thought and talk that such occasions furnish to the fortunate ones who move within these magic circles. Compare your dull existence with the gaiety and pleasure of our life, think how much you are missing! I thought you would like to see the picture of the lady who set every tongue in motion, arrayed as she has been in her magnificent costume. I hope in your letter you will show a little more interest in social affairs than you have heretofore. Tell me what you think of the picture." The rest of the contents of the letter continued in the same tenor.

When Ernestine finished it she let the letter drop in her lap, and while looking at it in an abstracted way Olga noticed a peculiar vibration run through her frame. She almost held her breath as she saw the solemn expression of her countenance. She opened her lips and slowly said: "It appears that David's idea is true, that on the shoulders of the women of a nation depends the stability of society. 'That our daughters may be as cornerstones polished after the similitude of the palace.' They certainly are the cornerstones and pillars of the structure of civilization. It is stated that cultivated womanhood is a blessing in any community, not as an ornament, but as an upbuilding and uplifting power, as a directing guide to society and life as a whole. If the statement is founded on truth, who can estimate the evil and ruin resulting from the wrong application of so much power? My poor mother, who was once so plain and unpretentious, has been misled by another woman's pride and greed, and has caused my father's honest heart to turn in the wrong direction. I know he is not a happy man! There was a time when we were a contented, a happy family, but what are we today? Oh, I see a distressing picture. I see the social body of my beloved country is deformed and consumed by snobbery and idleness. The

symptoms appear so violent as to cause apprehension, and nothing but a radical change will save it! Snobbery must cease and true democracy must take its place. The deadening example of the wealthy or idle class is producing the dreadful result of an unreasonable contempt for labor. Is labor despised because it is disagreeable? No! but because it is not respected! Because he or she who earn their bread are excluded from the so-called best society! Oh, the dreadful picture! The American aristocracy constituted of sharpers, dead beats defrauding their fellow beings! And look at the glaring inconsistency! Look at the manner in which the money wrung from honest toil is misused. Shame, a thousand times, shame! My father feels guilty in the presence of his daughter, how will the sharp dealers feel in the presence of the Divine Judge! Will their ill-acquired money, which they donate to build churches, asylums, hospitals and colleges cleanse the ugly scars in their souls marked by greed and oppression?"

For a while she remained silent, then turning to her friend, "Please tell me," she said, "why, why is it that the gaieties and pleasures so enthusiastically described by my mother have no attraction for me, and I would so gladly tell her that I do not miss anything; that my existence here is not dull, but filled with the sweetest and calmest happiness? I am very sorry my dear mother calls this foolishness, very sorry—please read now your brother's letter."

Olga opened it and looking at the date she exclaimed: "The dear boy He is now in Italy. The task he has assumed certainly demands that he acquaint himself with the conditions in every land under the sun!"

Then she began to read: "My dear sister: Everything in the world seems subjected to changes, only one thing appears stationary, unchangeable, and that is the condition of the working people. I have been visiting the classic land, the land of flowers, music and poetry, beautiful Italy, which has been reduced to a chronic state of poverty. There is so much that is at a terrible variance with the principles of right and justice that were it not that the new discovery of every phase of human misery appeals to our souls and makes our hearts be longing for a happier, a natural condition for the great masses of our fellow beings, our courage would become shaky. Nature provides everything necessary to transform this

planet into an exquisitely beautiful living place for the human family and everything useful and beautiful should be applied for some good purpose, and everybody should contribute their full quota by the exercise of their energy and talent. Idleness should be branded as a crime. No one except those unable to work should be allowed to live on the toil of others; then would the heavenly transformation appear. I have inspected the places where the producing classes live, and nowhere are any improved conditions, while those for whom they must toil or else starve, never take a thought or care a straw how hard the toilers' struggle is, and how joyless and monotonous is their life. I am at present in a district which is quite important for a careful investigation. Here is a large glass factory. I have visited the homes—or what bears the name of homes—and my heart carried away such a load of sadness and gloom which for days could not be shaken off. Clustered around the black, unsightly factory building are the huts of the producers of that indispensable article—glass. No matter how large the family, they are seldom allowed more than three rooms, if such holes can be honored with the name of rooms. Although they produce the large, beautiful panes of glass, and roast their hands and faces at the fiery furnace, their rooms never contain more than one window, and some none at all. The floors are of roughly hewn stones and the walls show the decay of ages. Some of the rooms have no floors and the ceilings are so low that grown persons cannot stand upright. The views out of the windows are old sheds and disagreeable things; nothing to stimulate a desire for better things. I have watched their toilsome work. How much industry and skill is required! Are they not rightfully entitled to more than a bare living? I assure you, my dear sister, that unless we take the pains of finding out how the producing classes live we become indifferent, yes, totally unconcerned, about the existence, the struggles and discouragements of the most worthy portion of the human family. Going through all these experiences I become more and more convinced that mankind would show forth its Divine Nature if given the right conditions in which to thrive. I am making a careful investigation concerning the relation between the employer and employes, and I know you agree with me that not against the people, but against the system which causes the degeneracy of mankind, must our concerted efforts be directed. In this particular case

the employer is recognized as a man of a very kind disposition. He is extremely religious and would undoubtedly be a model man but his business is very extensive and he must employ superintendents and other officers. The wretched locality where his wealth is coined is not congenial with his nor his family's tastes, therefore he sees very little and knows very little of how the toilers live. The superintendent who comes in contact with them is a hard-hearted and hypocritical man. Through his cunning and sanctimonious behavior he has gained such an ascendency that everybody is afraid of displeasing him. At his instigation the wages have been slowly lowered, little privileges that were granted them under former overseers, such as receiving a few candles, some fuel, fresh straw once a year for their beds, he has deprived them of even these. At any hour during the night one can see toilers lying around on the hard stones for rest; they prefer the bare ground to the dark, filthy holes assigned to them as their resting place. Some of the laborers in the factory earn so little that very often to season their meals they are seen scraping the rough looking things they call candlesticks to obtain the tallow, rancid and filthy, for their food condiment. I was standing one morning, filled with sympathy as I looked at the bleak surroundings and the cheerless countenances of the toilers, when my attention was attracted by the rustling noise of silk and the murmuring of many voices. I turned my eyes in that direction and my first thought was, "Oh, what a contrast! Those are beings who go through the world free from care and exhaustion, overwork and poverty!" A number of elegantly attired ladies, escorted by the superintendent, appeared and as quickly disappeared, as they showed their anxiety to get out of the unattractive enclosure. I made enquiries who the ladies were and from the answer I received I came to the same conclusions that my investigations always led me to, and that is, that the present wrong system will not, cannot be peaceably changed without the willing co-operation of women. In this, as in almost every other case, it is the worldliness, the extravagance of women which is at the bottom of the inequality between employers and employes. The employer in this case is a very plain man, his habits are very simple, but the extravagance of his wife and daughters knows no limit. Their city, country and sea shore residences are regular vortexes where countless piles of money are engulfed. If the women were a

little plainer and less worldly the toilers would receive better remuneration; if they would take a little interest in the condition of those who produce so much wealth they could make their lives more cheerful and happy, and they then would have a chance to become better. I followed them at a certain distance to see the effect that their appearance would produce upon the inhabitants of that squalid place. Some of the men looked at them with open mouths and seemed to be transfixed, others ran behind boxes or boards where they could cast furtive glances without being seen. When they passed by the hovels it was surprising to see the expressions on the faces of the wives and daughters of the workers. At some of the windows were piles of heads, one above another. A flashing expression seemed to be rushing out of their eyes! Again and again I ask, why in the name of justice are the useful producers deprived of everything that is beautiful? Why are they to be overworked, underpaid and condemned to a cheerless existence? In this new century the fashionable 'four hundred,' who classify themselves as of no common mould, ought to realize that they create envy, jealousy and hatred, as well as a wild chase for gain, which so often leads to crime and madness!

"Something very important has attracted my attention, and that is that the women of the working class are, as a rule, extremely church bound. I have seen them drop everything and hurry to church as soon as the bell rang, and they conscientiously train their children in that manner. The boys may outgrow much of it, but the church does not worry because the girls, when they marry, usually awaken and bring back the lost sheep into the fold. Can they do otherwise when everlastingly these credulous people are reminded that it is their duty to submit to their lot, or else they will bring down upon them the wrath of God? What I saw and heard in the rural districts of Germany is repeated here by the so-called representatives of an impartial God, who is too loving and merciful to behold and sanction an unjust division among his children; the God who is no respector of persons and who certainly condemns the arbitrary erection of superior classes demanding respect and homage from those whom they condemn to a life of ignorance and toil! While in Germany a friend asked me to visit a school where the girls were taught sewing and knitting. It not being customary for gentlemen to appear in the room I

asked to remain in the corridor. I was hardly seated when the girls began to appear, nearly all dressed in coarse and ill fitting garments. At the proper time appeared the servant of the Lord, a gold headed cane in his hand, his well fitting cloth suit and a heavy gold chain, his shining tall hat and faultlessly polished shoes, a strong contrast I assure you. He entered and closed the door; his voice was strong and I could easily hear everything he said. He approved the plain work that was done, but I shall never forget the harsh sound of his voice as he scolded one girl who was doing some embroidery. 'Such foolish notions,' he screamed, 'must be knocked out of the heads of the girls belonging to the working and poor classes! What the girls belonging to the poor class need to learn is plain work and patching.' It must have hurt the poor girl's heart for her sobbing could be plainly heard in the corridor, but that did not soften the heart of the well-clad man of God, for he authoritatively repeated, 'Let this be the last time that I see anyone do anything but what I have ordered a while ago.' No wonder, then, if from childhood the working class is taught that God has so ordained it that it cannot escape from servitude! And when shall we see the blessed time when man shall no longer cringe submissively to a wrong system in order to live upon this beautiful mother earth provided freely by the living God for the good of all? I repeat it again and again, we shall see it the quickest when it shall be recognized, practiced and taught by womankind, for they possess the moulding power which, when used in the correct manner, shall be resistless and permanent! I send you a few extracts from papers sent to me by the Brotherhood of Destruction. There are low mutterings and mysterious happenings not perceived by the uninitiated ones but full of meaning to the watchful and evolutionary spirits. I will now close. Please give my best regards to Miss Palmey. Your loving brother, Ivanohe."

CHAPTER XI.

"God bless your brother," said Ernestine. "There is great hope for the world when young men rise so high that neither frown nor disapproval of the world's so-called best society affects them. I see those extracts are again from my native land, let me read them."

"'Child labor in America.—The wealthy owners of paper mills, planing mills and other manufactories live in magnificent mansions. By the shore can be seen numerous sail boats and steam yachts wherein the people of leisure go out fishing and boating, while boys and girls from eight to sixteen years of age work as hard as they can in order to earn 33, 50 and 75 cents a day. Think, ye kind hearted, Christian people, little boys exposed to the cold—thirty degrees below zero—dragging their dinner pails after them, being too small to lift them above the deep snow! And what of their education and childhood rights? Next a trunk factory where girls were imported with the object of lowering wages—their want compelling them to work for about half what the men received, the proprietors living in fine mansions while the wealth producers live in shanties. The stench from the old, dirty rags in a paper factory, mingled with the smell of sulphuric acid and other substances, the dust which pervades the room like a black cloud is inhaled by the unfortunate toilers, who contract consumption and other fatal diseases! Next a shoe factory, where boys and girls are the prime factors. Next a chair factory, where from a force of three hundred persons, one hundred to two hundred were boys from eight to fifteen years of age! Oh, the wickedness of it all!'

"I can proceed no longer," exclaimed Ernestine. "My resolution to enter the field of reform becomes stronger as I read what is going on in the world! My parents and their friends live a life which is hollow; they sacrifice substantial happiness and in vain they try to still the longings of their hearts by the means which the world approves. One hour of your brother's unselfish life is more replete with harmony and happiness than months of worldly

pleasures, devoid of love and sympathy toward our fellow beings. Now, as we have a little more time, we will read Florence's letter. You read it, please," and Olga did read it, and when she got through she remarked:

"Here we have a strong proof of what love and sympathy can perform. Florence has realized your noble act on her part—she saved another from a worse condition, and Mme. Konrad's love and generosity heals the broken hearted and elevates a literary genius who will fill an important place in the great Reconstructive Movement."

"So be it," solemnly added Ernestine.

"Let us now retire," said Olga, "and let us look cheerfully into the future; the leaven is fermenting and in due time the whole vast human lump will be ready to rise and be saved from all destructive errors!"

With a glad smile and a hearty handshaking Ernestine retired to her room. A few days later the two girls were resting under a large chestnut tree in the garden and Ernestine was speaking, eagerly explaining how she had read again Florence's letter, and a strong desire possessed her to visit Mme. Konrad. Their short vacation was not far off, and would it not be profitable for them to be present at some of those intellectual gatherings? Olga was more than pleased, and begged Ernestine to make the necessary arrangements with Florence as soon as possible, and so she did. When the young authoress received the letter she was so glad that she ran to the library, where she found the lady.

"Some good news, my dear?" she asked, as she looked at the radiant face of the young woman who stood before her with the open letter in her hand.

"May I read it to you?"

"Certainly," replied Mme. Konrad.

"I heartily welcome them," she said, after the letter was read. "I shall feel a great pleasure to personally meet the sister of the worthy head member of the Reconstructive Movement, and her friend whom I have learned to love for her good qualities. One excellent idea strikes me, and that is, the last letter I received from Mr. Ivanohe came from the northern part of Italy, and unless he is detained by some urgent business I hope he will accept my invitation to be here at the time that the two young ladies will be

present. Now, let this be between you and I, if he can come it shall be a complete surprise on both sides." Florence's face beamed with joy as she listened.

"Thank you," she said. "I will notify Ernestine at once that they are welcome."

"Yes, and then you will assist me in planning every arrangement. I anticipate this to be the beginning of an important event which will be solved in the future, if my impressions are correct. I understand that Miss Palmey is very gifted, and also Miss Olga, if she resembles her brother. We shall consider ourselves very much favored to have a chance to come in contact with such beautiful souls."

When Ernestine received the letter she did not open it immediately. She had learned to analyze a good deal of the contents of letters by a mysterious vibration which emanated from them. The sensations she received from it were so delightful, so sweet, that she told Olga when they met at the lunch hour to take it with her, that she would want to read it more than once, and they would talk it over at their regular evening meeting.

Mme. Konrad and her assistants had frequent consultations, the list of invited guests grew quite lengthy. The name of the principal figure was always spoken in whispers. After considerable exchanges of notes "he" had succeeded in arranging his numerous appointments so as not to disappoint Mme. Konrad, and when she had his promise to be at the villa at the right time she relied upon it and felt at ease.

As the time drew near Olga often noticed when Ernestine was with her that her eyes were riveted on her brother's picture. Sometimes she would rise from her seat and walk to the spot where the picture was and stand before it as one lost in deep reverie. Olga would watch her carefully and one day said: "Ernestine, I am fully convinced that you are trying to solve some mystery. You do not mind telling me, do you?"

"Not in the least," she replied. "Where do you suppose your brother is now?"

"He is to visit other parts of Italy."

"Well, then this certainly is puzzling. I see him coming in this direction."

"You do?"

"His form flashes before my inner vision. I know he is coming."

"Oh, I hope he will, my dearly beloved brother!"

The two friends chatted a little longer and finally Olga said: "Our next regular meeting will be at the villa of Mme. Konrad, and now let us say good night," and they retired.

The vacation time arrived and the two friends were ready and started on a very pleasant afternoon. According to calculation they were to arrive at the villa about seven o'clock in the evening. The journey was delightful and their hearts were beating fast as they saw from the distance the fine mansion and the fine, park-like grounds. When they entered the large gate Miss Florence came swiftly down the shaded path. The coach had stopped and when the two friends alighted from it they were caught in the arms of their delighted friend and the three walked cheerfully toward the building. Florence led them through different paths, studiously avoiding groups of ladies and gentlemen who were scattered around enjoying the splendid twilight of the autumn evening. Following their escort the two young ladies entered the beautiful mansion and were conducted into an elegant room where the hostess was waiting for them, and they were received so cordially that her great amiability won the hearts of the two strangers at once. They were taken to their appointed room and then Florence joined the lady again, who told her that everything was right. The two young ladies had arrived about an hour later and she was glad that she had been careful not to meet the gentleman, who was in the garden with the other guests.

"I admire your cleverness," she said, "in having in so short a time, and without arousing any suspicion, found out his sister's favorite song and obtained his consent to sing it this evening. Now, you will entertain the young ladies until you are given the signal. I will see that the guests will be assembled at the right hour in the drawing room. The greatest attention will naturally be centered upon the main figure, the leading spirit of the Reconstructive Movement. Everybody is interested in his personality. A man who has cast aside title and all aristocratic claims and devoted his entire life to the betterment of the social conditions. At the right time I will mention the strong, prevailing idea advanced by the reformers who know the great role that music and song will play in arousing the dormant energies in the souls of the

people. You know, we had decided to ask Armida, who is so extremely fond of song and music, to sing first, but do not forget that we have changed that, and when you receive the signal, and as he begins the prelude, you will enter from the right side door where he cannot see you, nor can the young ladies see him until they have advanced about a dozen steps. Now, this is all, and we will watch the result of our carefully prepared surprise."

Florence went to her friends and Mme. Konrad to the large and brightly illumined drawing room. Soon the guests began to enter and the hostess noticed, as she had predicted, that the attention was centered upon the Russian gentleman. After they were all comfortably seated he was asked a number of questions. His vivid descriptions, his faultless comparisons and his keen penetration held the closest attention of his hearers. Mme. Konrad was watching her opportunity, which presented itself as the conversation had turned in that direction and he was expressing his gratification having stopped a few days ago at the beautiful city of Milano where he heard for the third time the incomparable prima donna, Parepa Rosa, and from the depth of his soul he wished they could secure a large number of first-class singers.

"Pardon me," said Mme. Konrad, "then with many other clear sighted reformers you believe that music and song will play a powerful role in the coming conflict?"

"I do, Madame, most positively. In this age more than in any other is the human heart receptive to the divine influence of music."

Armida was moving restlessly in her seat, and with a peculiar expression in her face she said: "Mr. Ivanohe, will you kindly favor us with a song—one of the beautiful Russian songs?"

Everyone present expressed a great desire to hear him sing. He arose, bowed politely, and seated himself at the grand piano. When he struck the chords of the fine introduction the lady looked toward the door, gave the signal and soon there appeared the two young guests, dressed in white, holding each other's hand, listening intently and moving slowly as if attracted by an impelling force. Oblivious of their surroundings they advanced to where they could see the singer, their arms encircled each other's form, while the performer, unconscious of the silent outburst of emotions, gave vent to his feelings which the soulful composition called forth. The two girls,

clinging closely to one another, continued their slow approach toward the singer. It was a charming picture, the surprise and extreme delight depicted in their lovely countenances, and those present seemed to be under a spell, as if they saw an ethereal apparition. When he reached the grand finale everybody was thrilled with what they had heard and saw.

Olga whispered softly: "Ivanohe, my dear brother!" As if touched by a galvanic battery Ivanohe jumped to his feet and held his sister in a tender embrace. Madame Konrad took the place of Olga near Ernestine and soon introduced her first to Mr. Ivanohe and then presented her and Olga to the dlighted assembly.

"This is the greatest and most pleasant surprise I have ever experienced in my life," said Ivanohe.

Many were the questions asked and answered by the brother and sister, and Ernestine seemed unable to take her eyes from Ivanohe's handsome countenance. Presently Miss Armida arose and with a flushed face and eyes glistening and animated, she said:

"In my humble opinion I feel convinced that what the gentleman said is true, and I think his desire of securing a large number of first class singers could be easily gratified. There is a great deal of talent that goes to waste which could be utilized for such a grand purpose. There are a great number of young men and women in the hills and mountains of Italy who possess superb voices, and they could easily be induced to leave those uncultured and unattractive places. There are voices among those neglected beings that thrill one's soul. Ah, the beauty and charm of a fine human voice!"

The young lady had spoken, being apparently moved by a strong impulse, and looking around a little embarrassed she resumed her seat and a strong murmur of approbation went through the room.

"Now, Miss Armida," said Mme. Konrad, "that you have touched upon that enchanting subject I know that everyone present will be much obliged to you if you will favor us with one of your charming improvisations."

"I do not wish to appear presumptious, in fact I may not succeed at all, but the exquisite song of the gentleman, the appearance of the two lovely young ladies and the pleasant surprise have stirred up my soul to a high degree, and—who knows—but I hope

it may be favorable for producing what Mme. Konrad kindly calls inspirational improvising."

She arose and walked lightly to the piano. As she sat there playing softly, several times she lifted her head, her breath coming a little deeper and faster as her playing continued and seemed to pass from a sad appeal to an impassionate outburst, her voice was heard. The mournful tones seemed to call forth undefined echoes of anguish, a pathos rang deep into the hearts of the listeners, then an expression of stern resolve, then the struggle and fear, the smothered outcry of the half vanquished, then an almost superhuman effort to repel the wrong—and next followed the outflow of a grateful heart, a heart conscious of having overcome it, and filled with infinite tenderness. The last stanza was strangely combined; it was dedicated to her native land, sparkling with love, caresses and pure longing, and such was her power in projecting what she conceived in her mind that she held the audience in the most rapt attention, and when she finished she was overwhelmed as an "Improvisatrice" with expressions of delight and admiration.

Mr. Ivanohe stood before her and said: "Signorina, accept my sincere thanks. Your inspiring talent has given me a foretaste of the singing of the future. It will be singing untrammeled by ambition or greed, the soul of song free to expand, and powerful to touch with its magic sounds the most intimate chords of the heart! We think we hear the best when we listen to our famous singers, but what are they compared to those whose gifts teach the highest perfection because free from the desire to reap external rewards! Keep your heart free from a desire for sordid gain and vanity and you will remain one of the chosen instruments to voice the harmony of the Infinite!"

"I am not worthy of your kind remarks," she said, falteringly, covering her face with both hands.

"My good child," said Mme. Konrad, drawing near to her, "those good and kind remarks will bring you more courage. Thank heaven that you are endowed with that wonderful gift which will develop to an extraordinary degree, considering that in so short a time you have accomplished so much, and I will tell you what I have told others gifted as you are, and which is stated by a scientist in his analysis and cultivation of 'Tune,' that 'This state of rapture in which the whole soul becomes thoroughly melted with holy ten-

derness, and inspired by the spirit of Eternal Light and Love, music and song, can do more than all else combined; and can be so practiced as to become the very chantings of another and better world and more effectually to prepare humanity to join the chorus of heaven than all other means united."

"Amen! Amen!" enthusiastically exclaimed the audience.

At that moment the arrival of a gentleman was announced and every eye was turned toward the door and they soon beheld a figure whose presence seemed to radiate a soft and mellow aura. His tall and perfectly proportioned figure, his dark brown hair and carefully trimmed beard, his large brown eyes, his elastic step and movement bespoke a man in the prime of life. His real age would have been disputed by even the closest observer. Nothing short of the legal record of his birth would have convinced the beholders that before them stood an octogenarian. To the task of overcoming decrepitude and the ills that flesh seem heir to he had devoted much time and all his higher faculties. That he was on the high path of success his appearance fully demonstrated. He knew that the incredulous world demands facts and proofs. After the customary courtesies he took his place near Ivanohe and his sister. The many questions he asked them in regard to their country and the minute details into which he entered in regard to the Reconstructive work plainly showed his deep interest in the movement and everyone present listened with close attention. When a short pause followed Mme. Konrad arose and said: "Ladies and gentlemen, most all of you know this gentleman. For a long time we have been longing to see him. We consider it a privilege to see him this evening—one of Switzerland's most advanced thinkers—and we shall be very glad and very thankful, Sir, to listen to one of your instructive speeches."

The gentleman arose and bowing very courteously, began:

"Ladies and Gentlemen: It is our good fortune to live in this remarkable period. Never before, we might say, has human thought been in such marvelous activity—mental activity—not confined to the few and parceled out in crumbs to the many, as in the past. To guide this activity into the right path, which will enable it to put forth its full fruition, we must understand the meaning of mental activity, which is really the subtle mental dynamite, the silent power of mind, that will bring the wonderful evolution in all our

lives. It will be the unfoldment of the souls with their infinite possibilities. The dense atmosphere of material sense will disappear and the pure ideals will be perceived with their transcendental beauty! One after another of the great luminaries who left the world better for having lived in it, have pointed out the unmistakable marks as to what paths to follow in order to obtain the happiness which passeth understanding. Following the path that they have mapped out for us, what vistas open to the expectant, longing inner sight! What powers to be unfolded by a correct understanding of the laws of our true being! What inspirations to spur us on to reach the glorious goal! Material sense holds the world in bondage, clips the wings and aspirations and draws down a heavy curtain which shuts out the saving light! That we cannot serve two masters if we want to be truly free is an established fact. In the search for true freedom we come face to face with the task of overcoming the world, the flesh and all evils. Simplicity of life, mastery over the lower demands of nature are acquired by faithfully living up to that light which comes to him or her who earnestly and perseveringly seeks for it, and when acquired, then comes the full realization of the greatness and stability of the one and the smallness and fugacity of the other. The deeper mankind has sunk into worldliness, the blacker have been the pages of history. The more it was ruled by the demands of animal nature the more unmercifully has it tramped upon the rights of the masses, resulting in brutal tyranny. Intellect and spirituality were forced to remain latent for the want of opportunities for development. But, as we always notice, in the course of time, evil destroys itself! There comes the crisis in the life of individuals as well as nations. If the people were guided by true wisdom and foresight, there would be no need for any destroying disturbance, and that is what the Reconstructive Movement will accomplish. Its mission, its energies being bent on educating the great masses, selecting the best qualified minds in art, music, poetry, sculpture, literature and sciences to unselfishly devote their talents to the uplifting of thought, and with their strong object lessons impress the minds as to what to do when the right time arrives. We will hope and pray that when the day for the great change arrives there will be a sufficient number of enlightened and unwavering beings to carry out the heroic task they have assumed. The greatest impediment is in

changing the lines of thought in which the minds of the people have been trained from childhood concerning the wrong conception of deity and the functions of state or nation. Through wrong teachings the creature has been, so to say, separated from the creator, and the welfare of the people from the assumed authorities—and at the door of these two causes can be laid the whole history that has darkened this fair earth. The constant thought and realization of man's oneness with the infinite source of his being imparts strength, love and wisdom by which he can demontsrate his divine attributes, while the opposite induces him to become of the earth earthy. Ignorance, the prolific source of selfishness and superstition, has held its own, until our God-nature has become beyond recognition. When we overcome selfishness the light which shineth in us will radiate, and it will assist all those who are still in bondage and struggling to rise upward. Through a wrong conception of what constitutes happiness it was sought in the wrong way and reaped accordingly. We are constantly reminded that history repeats itself and no statement can be more true, for whenever the same causes are at work, the same effects must follow. Whenever the lower self is not restrained it leads individuals, and consequently nations, into confusion and total collapse. The root of the greatest evil producer has always been exclusiveness—creating ranks, dividing the human family, feeding pride, engendering hatred, distrust and envy. Century after century mankind has sighed and moaned for liberty and peace, but being immersed in materiality the effulgent rays of Divine love and harmony could not reach them. Ambition and flattery being cultivated instead of meekness, kindness, gentleness and forgiveness; ambition and flattery which caused the ears to become dull and the heart gross, has prevented the true ego from being revealed. The weariness and dissatisfaction which fills the heart with the empty illusions of sense has produced in many a profound yearning for a better understanding, and its sincerity has proven the sure guide into the path of salvation. There is no turning to right or left. The way is straight and narrow, but it leads to complete happiness. It is more than sad that a world which contains in itself everything to make it a heaven of peace and joy, is turned through the lack of understanding into a vale of tears. I think so often of the excellent ideas expressed by F. W. Robertson: 'That the warnings

which the Bible utters against the things of this world bring no charge against the glorious world itself. The world is the glass through which we see our maker. But what men do is this: They put the dull quicksilver of their selfishness behind the glass, and so it becomes not the transparent medium through which God shines, but the dead opaque which reflects back themselves, so it gives back their own false feelings and false nature.'

"The age in which we live is most remarkable for its bold attitude in solving problems which would have caused fear and terror to our ancestors. Among the most hopeful signs of this age is the intelligent attitude of women. They are coming to the front and taking their rightful place. I will quote from the writings of a woman who is wielding a great influence for good, and whose writings have uplifted thousands from despondency and misery. She says: 'Ignorance is, of course, at the base of all crime and all suffering, and it is right and wise and proper to seek to know how best and most quickly to reach and remove this ignorance, to supplant it with a knowledge of the unity of the race and of the law which returns to the doer the fruits of every act done, of every thought sent forth, whether it be of peace, of joy and love, or of enmity and strife. If the modern teachings of mental science are not calculated to better the conditions of all men, not a class—but of all men everywhere, then it is not worthy of acceptance by any; if from its lifting to a higher and happier existence right here in this world it would exclude any, for if but one soul were left out it were unworthy of acceptance by any, for all must suffer with that one. Unless the whole body be at peace and at rest no portion of it can be. Will the body sitting cozily by the fire be comfortable if the hand be thrust through the window into the cold of an arctic winter? Or if the foot be so near the flame as to blister will the body allow it to retain its position, though to the body itself there comes from the fire no more than a cordial warmth? Mental science not only proclaims the unity of the race, but its every teaching is based upon the truth that as a man thinketh so is he, and if he so much as thinks to do a wrong to another, he thereby produces a condition of inharmony within his own being which cannot but bring to his own lips a draught as bitter as that which he would cause another to drink.'—H. W.

"The question to which every thinker attaches so much import-

ance is the so-called woman's question. If we wish to form a correct opinion concerning the condition of a country's advancement look at the status of the women. Civilization must rise or fall with the advancement or stagnation of the women. Look into the history of any nation in all ages and you can see their advancement according to the position in which women were placed. When women were common proeprty of the tribe, like horses and other cattle, civilization was at its lowest. When Greece and Rome recognized a woman's son as her legal master, civilization was such only in name. When theologians taught that woman was the cause of sin and sorrow; at the council of Macon the bishops gravely debated the question as to whether or not women had souls and decided by a majority of one vote that they had, darkness hung over a blind world. When Bible texts were construed to suit the fancies of the blind element and were constantly thrown into the faces of the thoughtful women who dared to question their rights, civilization struggled to start on its feet but could not succeed as long as the unnatural pressure was turned upon the mothers of the race. There is only one country thus far in the world where women have a better opportunity to make their influence felt. A great deal more might rightfully be expected from them, but it gives us a hint as to the difficulty to break up the mental lethargy induced by centuries of neglect and injustice. If the women of that country, that great, free country, fail to rise to the position demanded by this remarkable age, then woe to the world!

"I have gathered a long list of names of the mothers of great men in every important calling in life, showing the unmistakable traces of pre-natal endowment. If it were not getting late I would like to make it more clear and show without a shadow of doubt that a radical change which will enable mankind to rise to a higher civilization, to a higher development of their powers, cannot be reached without the full co operation of women; so, whatever we do let us not lose sight of the most important factor in the Reconstructive Movement. I can feel that our thoughts are in perfect harmony and I consider myself fortunate in partaking of the beneficial and strengthening emanations from minds dedicated to this sublime task."

"Do you not think it is deplorable," said one lady, "that so many women in the country you have mentioned forget or ignore

their mission in life so completely as to inaugurate or create a social order which was not approved by the founders of that great republic?"

"Yes, Madame, it is deplorable in more ways than one. If they were satisfied and kept within their exclusive circle their extravagant and worldly doings would be less harmful, but their hearts become empty, forlorn and desolate, and they call it 'ennui,' and to calm it they seek admiration and flattery from the world outside of their narrow circle. People of that class are, and have always been, the great obstacle of human progress. They pose as the high class in society, but that term every intelligent, thinking person must admit is misplaced. The term 'high' ought to be applied to the useful, industrial and moral class of society. A class which 'toils not, neither does it spin, and yet are arrayed in purple and fine linen,' and are placed where they do not exercise their God-given powers, must degenerate, and through their bad example they drag untold numbers into the same road of perdition. I notice in reading papers from abroad that some honest editors are exposing in strong terms the slavish adulation of the doings of that class of people by some of the biggest papers in the country. Those honest and humane editors are fervently wishing for the coming of the twentieth century Moses who will lead the nation out of the present chaos. Everyone who takes sufficient care to look under the surface of the misrule and greed will clearly see that the Moses of the twentieth century who will wield the power for the progress demanded by this century, is woman! The deep and rational thinker will discover that the active factor for the advancement or the retrogression of any nation is women. Is it not plain enough yet that the motive power in the accumulation of wealth in the hands of the few and reducing to poverty and want the many, is woman, the power behind the throne? Read of diamonds and other gems which rival with royal and imperial collections, selected and bought by the women of the millionaires! The description of jeweled suspenders, diamond breast plates, diamond riviere, huge solid silver trays so heavy that it takes two men to carry them, makes the heart weary when almost at the same time one reads of the want and suffering that sends the groans of helplessness almost within hearing of so much extravagance! Many a woman has squandered millions of dollars to attain the 'lofty' position of social leader-

ship—says a paper—and to further that end a woman has had a palace built in imitation of the palace of the Doges of Venice. This woman, the paper states, has bent her energies to impart to her palace an atmosphere of the middle ages. Another states how a man of wealth has arranged to build a two million dollar palace to please his wife. In order to ape European aristocracy as much as possible he has had the top of the mountain cut off and the palace is to be built much like the castles of old, with battlements and port holes. 'Just think,' says the paper, 'ye smelter men and miners, how you will enjoy the knowledge of Americans living in castles and entertaining like kings!' At this time the power behind the throne must be exposed, for they, more than men, must be blamed for turning the land of the free into an aristocracy of wealth not only, but selling themselves for titles. It is time to remind them of Emerson's message, and would to goodness that they would take it to heart and stop in the ruinous path before it is too late. Before I read Emerson's message I will quote another warning from Ruskin: 'The guilty thieves of Europe, the real sources of all deadly wars in it, are the capitalists—that is to say, people who live by percentages on the labor of others instead of by fair wages of their own.' Think of women rebuilding social castes with the millions wrung from the industrial toilers of the land of the free! If the following message does not reach the souls of those who arbitrarily style themselves the cream of society, we hope it will touch the more receptive ones:

"'God said: I am tired of kings;
I suffer them no more,
Up to my ear the morning brings
The outrage of the poor.
Think ye I made this ball
A field of havoc and war,
Where tyrants great and tyrants small
Might harry the weak and poor?
My angel, his name is Freedom—
Choose him to be your king.
He shall cut pathways east and west
And fend you with his wing.
I will have never a noble;

No lineage counted great.
Fishers and choppers and plowmen
Shall constitute a state.
And ye shall succor man,
'Tis nobleness to serve;
Help them who cannot help again;
Beware from right to swerve.'

"Very broad hints are thrown out on the unhealthy condition of the cream of society. Some of the millionaires, the public is told, are absolutely ignoring the seventh commandment. The clergy, we are reminded, think twice before they denounce that outrageous behavior; they fear to lose the golden keys to their pews. Is it possible for anyone who gives even a superficial glance at that state of affairs to not discover the cause of the moral malady afflicting that portion of society which looks down with contempt upon those whose lives are filled with useful efforts? When women rack their brains to create surroundings of luxury, an atmosphere filled with what intoxicates the senses, is anyone to wonder at the abnormal outcome?

"We Swiss people, who for centuries have fought the monstrous claims of ambition and selfishness, ought to look with severity and pray and hope that a sound change may take place and save the liberty of our sister republic. I venerate the memory of our liberty-loving countrywomen, how with burning words they spurred the men to action. When in the valley, in high promontories hung hundreds of proud castles like a slave chain around the neck of our country and men tamely submitted to outrages inflicted by the usurpers, it was women's intense consciousness of the monstrous wrongs that aroused the sleeping indignation in men's hearts and then they knew no more rest until tyranny was overthrown. The greatest wrong on earth is serfdom under the iron scepter of pride and injustice, for every individual's birthright is dominion—not subjection. The history of this country is inspiring. The strength and firmness of our citizens was the result of the consciousness that freedom was above ease, wealth and even life! The heroic wives and daughters in Appenzell, forming a long line of combatants on the top of the mountain wearing the shepherd's shirt, determined to die for the great and saving principle of Liberty with

their husbands, fathers and brothers, or help them to obtain the victory! How could men resist the inspiration!

"Reformers are often criticised for their attitude against the church, but I say let everyone dispassionately investigate and study that question and they will no longer criticise and condemn the honest reformers but will heartily agree with them. Without extending the investigation further in this, our land, we can find that the unjust dealings were the same as in other countries. We had to combat against the self-constituted authorities of the church, strongly combined with the self-constituted worldly authorities. The wealthy cloisters, the magnificent palaces of king and nobles, where they lived in idleness and luxury and were the dreadful scourges of the oppressed and starving people, were often reduced to ashes, but how obstinate were the nobles and the bishops! True, life was not and is not understood by them or their doings and methods would have been radically changed and mankind would no longer be in bondage. We must remember that those self-constituted authorities have never been the initiators of any new and necessary reform, but the unassuming, the plain people! One of the most remarkable proofs of this assertion stands before our astonished sight today. The unassuming and sincere seekers of the 'True life' have discovered it and by the guidance of that divine light they are led to solve one mystery after another. By this understanding the worldly desires are changed into desires for a higher development and a willing and loving service for the good of all. The more men and women are willing to attain divine perfection by loving their neighbors as themselves, the more they become free from the limitations of sense which leads to all woes and sufferings. Freedom from sickness, and even old age and death, we are promised as a reward for our modest and loving life. By attuning our minds to the eternal source of all harmony, worldliness with all its concomitants—pride, lust of power, envy, etc.—loses its hold upon us. Love of personal display disappears and the true love, when rightly nursed, is displayed without personal effort; it shines, radiating its beneficiary rays as natural and spontaneous as the sun radiates its life-giving rays. Pride, that deathly destroyer of peace and good will, disappears from our heart and in its place dwells the meekness and gentleness that comes with the realization of what the great moral and spiritual master said: 'That of ourselves we can do nothing,

but the Father in us does the work.' If you allow me, I will state that within me I feel the power to overcome what the world has until recently considered an impossibility. The peace and happiness we acquire by concentrating our thoughts and energies upon the good can only be believed when we obtain the power to demonstrate it. Our great teacher, who had attained this high state of perfection, beheld through his pure vision the perfect man. In the perfect man he saw God's image and the power of recognizing only the pure and good; healed the sinner of his moral weakness and the sick of his disease. By his teaching that the kingdom of heaven is within you he saw man holy and divine. Not laws on statute books, courts and prisons change the morally weak, but the divine substance of pure love and justice. The Brotherhood of Reconstruction is the only movement which has probed the cause of man's enslavement, and its remedy cannot fail because it deals at the root of it."

A great applause followed as the gent'eman took his seat.

Mr. Ivanohe had risen to his feet ready to speak when his sister drew his attention to the inspired young friend. With a motion of surprise and pleasure he resumed his seat. With her hands held upward, her form slightly bent forward, which seemed to radiate with a soft halo, and with a calm and impressive tone she began:

"Where the spirit of our heavenly Father is, there is liberty, and mankind is free to enter into the realm of his Maker! Has the time finally come when the great truth shall be understood? As an unchangeable verity it has been present in the world from its beginning, but short sighted humanity could not see it. Mankind naturally wonders at the new discoveries which will turn this old world into an entirely new one! Freedom, that heavenly inheritance which enables us to find the way to boundless happiness through the right understanding of our mission on earth! The creator's free gift to mankind was the whole earth. It was and it is in 'its' power to make it a real heaven! A free share of the Creator's gift was and is for every being born, but the destructive ideas of separateness, of cause and effect—God and man—reduced the Creator's gift into a bone of contention. The environments that result from conditions so contrary to the divine plan are visible in a world where each is for self, caring little or nothing for the neighbors, making it so difficult for the constructive power of love, the directive power of wisdom and the harmonizing power of truth to demonstrate, to

manifest the modern life-giving messages! The ideas so vividly presented by the gentleman have no doubt found lodging in the hearts of everyone present. The twentieth century, we are reminded again and again, will witness the greatest change for the better than any of the centuries of the past. A mighty spiritual wave is flowing through the minds of the seekers after truth and their progress will be as it has never been before. In every age of the world woman's physical beauty has been considered her most potent weapon. With the new understanding woman's mind will be free from the harassing thoughts of enhancing external beauty and the use of artificial embellishment. She will become conscious that the real and enduring beauty appears by living a true and harmonious life—a life of divine love and wisdom which makes the human temple not built with hands—radiant with the substance expressed in every helpful unselfish act performed for the good of others. With the clear understanding that mind is all-powerful in proportion as it is kept free from ignorance, and thereby by the rule of the infallible inner power she will be lifted out of all vexations that beset a woman's life and she will gladly accept the new mission. A life so full of radiant promises will not fail to attract the attention of women, and when they grasp the full significance of the new thought they will set themselves to the task of making it operative in their daily lives. Then may we look for the reconstructive period—that glorious——"

At this point the young girl seemed to be startled. She seemed impelled to speak but an evident struggle arose within her; she closed her eyes, folded her hands and stood as one gently determined not to say another word. Olga went to her, took her softly by the hand and led her to her seat. Others spoke, and at the close everyone felt strengthened and ready to enter into the reform work with renewed energy. When Ernestine and Olga were alone that evening, Olga said:

"It seems to me, my dear, that you have deprived us of something very interesting. Would you mind telling me what it was?"

"Please, not tonight. I will tell you tomorrow."

"Very well, I shall not insist. I know it is something important. Now, good night. It is late and you know tomorrow we must return."

As Ernestine was passing through the spacious corridor a door

opened softly and Miss Armida appeared, walking quickly toward her. With a deep emotion pictured in her beautiful face and in a low tone she said: "Pardon me, young lady, I know it is not right for me to act this way but I tried in vain to still my heart. The sight of you, Miss Palmey, the words you have spoken and the fact that you are a welcome guest at the home of this incomparably good lady—Madame Konrad—have made me bold enough to appear before you and ask you if I am correct or mistaken in that you are one of the young ladies that I met in Italy? What I felt at that time I could not explain, even to myself. It was a strange fascination and the events that followed would have completely wrecked my life had it not been for the loving heart of Miss Florence and the motherly tenderness of Mme. Konrad, who rescued me from a certain physical or moral death! Will you remain long with us?"

"Dear Miss," said Ernestine, extending a friendly hand to her, "no; we must return to the city tomorrow afternoon. You are correct and I will plainly tell you that after I saw you in Italy my soul was tortured at the thought that our frivolous appearance exerted an evil influence upon your simple habits and mind. I am acquainted with your sad past and I shall carry with me thoughts of exceeding joy at your good fortune in finding such true and noble friends who brought a change in your life which will make of you a useful and respected member of society. This splendid opportunity for development of your faculties and your extraordinary talent for music and song must fill your heart with gratefulness toward the blessed Providence."

"Oh! I am grateful, believe me—and it shall be the task of my life to show my benefactresses my deep appreciation of what they have done for me. Forgive me for having detained you—good night," and Ernestine continued her way to her apartment and retired for the night. She awoke early in the morning and as the day grew, such beautiful sights came to her view that she could not resist and her mind was made up to descend when she perceived at a short distance two persons and immediately she recognized Olga and her brother. Eagerly she watched them as they slowly approached. Occasionally they would stop. Nothing escaped their attention—the variety of trees and flowers, the structure of the graceful chioschies. Pretty soon she noticed that she had been

perceived by Olga's brother. He motioned to his sister and respectfully lifted his hat and at a quick pace they advanved to where she stood.

"Come down," said Olga when at a hearing distance, "this morning is simply perfect and nature in this locality is magnificent! I know you will enjoy this early walk."

They had not to wait long. One of the windows in her room opened upon a terrace at the end of which was a stone step. A beautifully carved arch overhung with delicate trailing vines opened into a broad path. Soon the three friends again exchanged greetings and together they resumed their walk.

"It is difficult to express in words what one's heart feels when coming face to face with nature and its manifold beauties," said Ernestine. "Silent admiration would seem the proper way, but when the appeal is so strong and overpowering, oh! it must be then that poetic natures in their transport express sublime thoughts and their souls are attuned and vibrate in unison with the Universal Life!"

She stood still, her sight slowly wandering from place to place.

"Ernestine," said Olga, "you are imparting to others your exquisite feelings. Look at my brother's face. He seems to be thrilled as vividly as you are."

"It is true," Ivanohe replied. "It is not often that my whole being is so thoroughly responsive as it is now to that undefinable something called Universal Life, and there is not the least doubt in my mind that this place is charged with the highest thought emanations that affects for good those fortunate enough to come within its radius."

"We will have a good chance to enjoy the beauty of this favored spot," said Olga. "Mme. Konrad has sent word that breakfast will be served at 8 o'clock, at which time she will return. She left this morning very early to attend to something important. Let us retrace our steps to that inviting chiosco we passed as we came here. We have so much to say and as we have such a favorable opportunity, let us take a survey of the whole field of operation, if we can in a few hours accomplish the task."

"This, my dear sister, may interfere with the pleasures of Miss Palmey, whose fondness of nature would perhaps make her prefer

to continue the examination of the many tasteful arrangements of this rare spot."

With an obliging smile Ernestine answered that her pleasure would consist in doing what would be best, and that an occasion like this must be improved to the utmost.

"Now, follow me," said Olga, "and on she went. She looked back several times. Her two companions could not resist to stop and examine some rare plants or peeping into some hidden grotto, or to linger before a sparkling fountain surrounded with luxuriant water plants. Finally they reached the place where Olga was already seated in one of the comfortable garden chairs. The chiosco was situated upon a promontory. The place was undoubtedly selected for the magnificent view it commanded. When they were seated Olga said:

"Do you know, brother, it has been for a long time an ardent wish of mine for an occasion like this. I have devoured your letters. I have religiously—I might say—impressed all your doings on my mind, and now that we can speak face to face I propose to make the most of it. When and where are your operations to begin?".

"Your eagerness, my sister, is what is very encouraging, and by persevering it will inspire energy and action and it will insure success! Now, allow me to answer by quoting some statements by Herbert Spencer: 'No one can be perfectly free till all are free; no one can be perfectly moral till all are moral; no one can be perfectly happy till all are happy.' I know you can grasp the full import of these all embracing statements, but has the world understood it? Has not the opposite been taught and the world has practiced it? Hence the bitter struggle in every age of the world under one guise or another. No one can be perfectly free until all are free! What has the world practiced but the black injustice of subjugation and tyranny? No one can be perfectly moral until all are moral! Has the world provided the moral and elevating environments which alone can help all to be moral? No one can be perfectly happy till all are happy Now, mark, if we succeed in bringing the world to see and practice sincerely the first two propositions, the last will be the natural outcome. You are both acquainted with the world's history. You know that in all epochs the destructive, domineering spirit has ignored the natural rights of the human race, and this could not be done without obliterating the claims of

the highest moral laws, the laws of right and justice, and the result has been to fill the world with unhappiness. Our aim, as you are aware, is to make these truths to appear so clear that they will force themselves upon every individual soul, for we firmly believe that every individual, if given every favorable opportunity, can excel in something which will add to the good of all. You can see that our operations have already begun and from the number that are constantly enlisting into our ranks we can safely draw the most felicitous augur for the success of the movement. To your second question—where will it begin?—our principles are so extensive that they will embrace the whole human family. Now, if you were to ask which country is apparently best prepared to carry into effect the great principles, there seems to be a unanimous belief that the great republic of North America is the best soil in which these advanced doctrines would take the most healthy and solid roots. To give you some idea of how the advanced thinkers look upon it, I will read you a few extracts from their papers: 'Reformers take as their watchword, not revolution, but evolution; they believe in the natural law of human progress whereby last year's endeavors are the seeds of next year's progress. A revolution, wherein the heartless monopolists are put down with violence, would bring about, at least for the time being, a complete collapse of industry, and the baser elements of society would raven like wolves. Revolutions are always deplorable. All terrors and bloodshed might be easily avoided if the individuals in so-called high places would open their eyes and wisely consider the situation instead of hindering and preventing the natural expansion and growth of human understanding. Let no one become discouraged with the idea that evolution is a slow process. The reformer's program, remember, is to watch, investigate and study, so as to help to evolve and mature the twentieth century progressive ideas. The reason why the belief is so strong that the United States is the most favorable land for a reform so broad and radical is, that the people have possessed a greater freedom than any other beings on earth. That great land of the free which does not use European diplomacy, which says one thing and means another, and ignores honesty and moral principle. It has listened to the warning of the really great man, George Washington, to guard against entangling alliances with the old continent, and as long as that warning has a firm lodgment in the public mind

that land of the free will gain the power to lead and obtain a more perfect civilization. It is my intention to visit that great country and becomes familiar with its methods of reform."

"If you do not mind," said Olga, "I will run to my room and bring my satchel, into which I threw everything pell mell and have not had time to examine any of my correspondence. I will be back directly," and off she went.

"I am glad you have so good an opinion of my native land," said Ernestine, "and I hope your sister may accompany me on my return home. I owe her more than I can express, as I begin to see the world as it is and feel a keen interest in its unfoldment."

"It is very gratifying to me to know how congenial you are to each other," replied Ivanohe. "I fully appreciate my sister's good disposition, but allow me to say that her efforts would not have been so successful had she not been so fortunate as to meet a nature as receptive as it is rare."

"Good, my brother!" said Olga, as she stood at the entrance. "Nothing could be truer than your last remark." She had advanced and emptied the contents of the satchel upon the table and said: "This is unusually large and you will oblige me by helping to assort them, as you see the correspondence comes from several nations. I notice several new additions, for instance, this one is new, if I mistake not. Can you discipher its postmarks?"

Ivanohe took [illegible]letter and as soon as he cast his eyes upon it he was perceptibly start[illegible]d.

"And here are others," she said, and handing them over to him she noticed his startled look. "What is it?" she asked.

"Tell me, sister, do you often receive letters from this source?"

"No, as I said a while ago, these are new additions. But what is the matter? You appear troubled."

"Observe this letter carefully and tell me if you do not see something unusual about it."

Olga took the letter, examined it carefully, and finally said: "No, to me it appears like any other ordinary letter."

"I am glad," said Ivanohe, "but I must own that I am displeased at the sight of that letter. You would hardly believe that it comes from the headquarters of the Brotherhood of Destruction. It has not been posted from the headquarters, their extreme caution does not permit them to do that, but I have detected their most secret

mark. No, do not ask me to reveal it to you, but for your safety I must tell you to ignore these letters completely or you may become involved in great trouble. Had I not seen this letter, and had you acknowledged its receipt, it would have been sufficient to keep your every movement shadowed by emissaries of the Destructive Movement. Read it, if you like, and destroy it immediately, and let no one except Miss Palmey see it and then you will incur no danger."

"I will read it aloud," said Olga.

"Honorable Miss: After many unsuccessful attempts to discover the whereabouts of the sister of the remarkable man—here are your initials—we made the discovery in an unlooked for manner. You are undoubtedly informed of the prominent part your brother takes in a movement which we consider, after the most careful investigation, an extreme waste of time and energy. Pardon our plain expression. We would not permit ourselves to speak as we do were it not that the present condition compels us to. Your brother wields an enormous influence. We have reasoned with him until we have given up in despair. As a last resort we appeal to his sister. Please give us one word, a friendly word, and we will send you what is needed to inform you of our plans of action, and when you understand them we do not doubt that you will agree with our methods to create a state of society that will be free from conditions which make life a burden. Our methods differ diametrically with those advocated by the other Brotherhood. Your brother and his followers anticipate great things, which only excites our pity. They fail to realize how deep-seated the wrongs are, and how like a deadly contagion, they are spreading all over creation. The ideal country where they expect to begin their operations is that great—it might have been a great—country, the United States of America. Enclosed you will find extracts from the press which will give you some idea as to how fast that young, free country is going down grade, following the trend that led to the ruin of other great republics in the past, and to save it there is only one way, and why—we ask again and again—why will your brother not see it? We place an unlimited faith in the power and influence of enlightened women; a large number have we already, and they are the most persevering and enthusiastic workers in our ranks. We are not so fortunate as to know you personally, but we have heard considerable of Mr. I. K.'s noble minded sister. We hardly dare look for an answer, and yet

could not resist the temptation to make the attempt. Most respectfully yours, S. S."—a number of initials and address—"Hartz Mountain, G. E."

The troubled look in Ivanohe's face increased. He was ready to speak when Olga said:

"Please let me read some of the articles. Here is one entitled, 'Society's Two Extremes.' 'When you read Mr. Allister's book you will have a picture of what our civilization has done for the rich. If you will walk through the M. street district, you will see what it has done for the poor. Between the two extremes you will find people of heart, brain and virtue. But among the four hundred and in M. street you will find two classes of people who are the counterparts of each other—in fact, the one produces the other. With all their differences they are strangely alike. One class is rich, the other is poor. One class is respectable, the other is despicable. One class is polished, the other is coarse. One class is clean, the other is filthy, but both are brainless, both are heartless, both are sensual. One class eats pate de foi gras, the other garlic—both live to eat. One class drinks champagne, the other bad whisky, but both live to drink. One class dances at the fashionable D., and the other in dives. One class is brutalized by neglect and poverty, the other is sensualized by luxury. An elegant Mr. L., filled to the chin with six kinds of wines, is trying to get into his carriage, and the filthy loafer, soaked with stale beer, sleeps in a lumber pile; both are brothers, both are idlers, both are triflers, both are supported by the labor of others, both are useless. One has been lifted to the top by our social system, the other has been kicked to the bottom.' Here is a long article—the title is, 'Aristocracy and Evolution.' By simply glancing at it I see that it denounces your good theories; it attacks them from beginning to end. It pronounces the possession wealth is prima facia evidence of ability. The insidious manner in which the line of division is drawn between the human family is enough to stir the indignation of the most phlegmatic individual. It eulogizes the monopolists and it demands the submission of the majority to the control of the few—the majority to submit to the orders of the ruling minority. It is argued that wealth represents the reward of ability, exactly as titles, honors and high offices represent the reward of ability in politics, wars, et cetera.' This is diabolical!" exclaimed Olga, "when we know how

and by what inhuman methods that class has always exploited the great masses. Condemned to ignorance, lowered to the condition of serfs, their whole lives reduced to a bitter struggle so they may furnish the rewards to the greedy and self-indulgent few! Oh, here is something of the revered French genius, Victor Hugo: 'No one who is familiar with the marvelous writings of that sublime humanitarian, Victor Hugo, need be told that he penned the following incisive statement of the power of the money kings: 'The equestrian statue, reserved for kings alone, is an excellent type of royalty. Let us be frank with words. The capitalist who steals the reward of labor is a king as well as the man of blood. The king mounts himself on the horse. The horse is the people. Sometimes this horse transfigures himself by degrees. At the beginning he is an ass; at the end he is a lion. Then he throws his rider to the ground, and we have 1643 in England and 1789 in France. He sometimes devours his rider, in which case we have England in 1649 and France in 1793. That the lion can again become a jackass is surprising, but a fact.' "

Ivanohe made a slight motion, as if to gather the clippings, when his sister gently detained him.

"Please, one more," she said. "Listen: 'A close and impartial examination of the facts and lessons of the past will prove that the most dangerous class in a civilized country is the millionaire class, those full-handed pirates and vultures of society who buy up legislatures, corrupt courts of justice and employ attorneys, senators and congressmen to do their bidding and undermine the very foundation and destroy the principles of a free government. This is no new question. The readers of Roman history will recognize the truth of the testimony introduced here—that in every community where we find the dangerously rich we also find the suffering and dangerously poor. In a little book written a few years ago by Rev. T. S. we learn that 'The classes from which we have most to fear are the two extremes of society—the dangerously rich and the dangerously poor, and the former are much more to be feared than the latter.' In an able article by Chancellor H. C. we read: 'He whose mind rests upon the lower classes as the cause of the horrors and wild forces in the riots in the reign of terror in France where the fierce passions of men who were nearest the brutes made havoc with all that was beautiful and orderly and good—he is no philosopher.

A philosophical analysis of the explosion of the populace which so often has desolated nations, would reveal a great series of causes leading far away from the populace itself. In ancient Greece the revolutions which established the democracies were movements of the low classes of the people; but before these risings we find, in many instances, the tyrannical oppression of a despot and his court, which today would be styled a 'ring.' It was the long period of fearful oppression in France represented by the selfish and voluptuous courts of Louis XIV and Lous XV during which the peasants were but beasts of burden. The danger which threatens the uprooting of society, the demolition of civil institutions and the desolation of all, is that which comes from the rich and powerful classes in a country. What we have to fear are the encroachments of those influential elements upon the rights of the people, who are naturally timid and slow to act, but woe to the oppressors when they are forced into united resistance! It is by the growing power of that class that the safety of that great republic is threatened, and the danger will appear in two forms, 'the demoralization of society and the sanguinary vengeance of the oppressed!'"

"Sister——"

"Yes, brother; I will not read the whole. Listen to this: 'The many instances of a large portion of the wealthy class impatiently demanding the use of militia in all cases of threatening or real violence, without an effort to secure the protection of the law through the civil forms and procedure provided by law, is an unpleasant augury, and one to be constantly watched by the true friends of constitutional liberty. And the fact that such incorporated wealth can command a large part of the press in that country to malign, misrepresent and aim to intimidate any who feel it a solemn duty to execute law by observing law, is a potent indication of the coming evil! The greatest dangers must be looked for as coming from the lawless units of great wealth rather than from the producers, who, in the language of the great Jefferson, 'Are more disposed to suffer, while evils are sufferable, than to right them by abolishing the forms to which they are accustomed.' The great millionaires, of course, demur, and, true to their low instincts, would disfranchise the peaceable, long-suffering proletariat and leave to that class no redress for popular grievances except by the methods of savagery.'"

"May not the Brotherhood of Destruction be right in their diagnosis and the needed remedies?" asked Olga.

Ivanohe was going to answer when, looking at Ernestine, he saw her ready to speak. He nodded respectfully. Thanking him she said:

"The more carefully we study the great questions in our wonderful age the clearer it appears to us that cruelty and oppression will arouse mankind to a state similar to the destroying and devouring lions, and if the lions again become jackasses, are they to be blamed, bound as they are by the chains of ignorance; deprived as they have always been and—we may say—are, of the opportunity to acquire that principle or quality which alone can reveal the uplifting, elevating power and which is, when we understand it, the Divine Wisdom? Convinced, as I am, no other reform can bring this realization to mankind, no other, I repeat again, but the Reconstructive Reform, which will cleanse the human mind of preconceived wrong ideas in regard to religion, social, political, industrial and other important subjects. Then all the abominable works of the flesh will disappear, because swept away by the glorious power of the spirit, consisting of pure love, joy, peace, gentleness, meekness, temperance, and then we will listen to and obey the great suggestions: Let us not be desirous of vainglory, provoking one another, envying one another—and then, surely no one will be again entangled with the yoke of bondage!"

"Amen! So be it," exclaimed heartily her friends.

Ivanohe was unfolding one of the articles he had picked up.

"Please let me see what that contains," said Olga. She took it, glancing at it quickly.

"Ah! I see," she began, "this is not from across the ocean, it is from nearer home and is another proof that if women were firm enough, or free from such temptations, men would not know—at least, many would not know—what to do with their great wealth. 'The two scions of nobility, tempting with princely gifts of gold, pearls and diamonds, laces and costliest articles that money can purchase, tempting a girl of rare beauty to join them as companions of pleasure. The girl dreads poverty but struggles hard to still the warnings of the inner voice. But the temptors press on—one promises her a palace in P——, the other one of the most magnificent equipages in L——.' I am sorry the rest is torn off. Oh, let us hope

the girl has stood firm to her true self! What strength of character must a girl, placed in such a position, display! Ah, may the time soon come when the system and the environments will be such that neither men nor women shall be exposed to temptations which are almost beyond their strength to resist."

"It is coming!" solemnly said Ivanohe, "and now, let us gather everything and be ready when we are called to breakfast." And so they did, and agreed to walk slowly in another direction toward the mansion. Silently and filled with admiration they went on. Breaking the silence, Ivanohe said in a very impressive manner:

"How quick would the world be transformed into a place fit for the angels if women, especially those with ample means like this lady, would follow her example by living for the happiness of others by serving others. The greatness of her soul is revealed——" at this moment Miss Florence appeared, as they had reached the entrance, and, extremely delighted at their sight, told them that the lady had returned and said: "Now, I will lead you to her."

CHAPTER XII.

Slowly they mounted the steps and their friend led the way to the dining room, where they found the hostess, who greeted them with the cordial and friendly manner which put everyone at ease and made them feel that they were really welcome. She apologized for having unceremoniously left that morning, but there were many important matters that called for her personal attention.

"Please, Madame, do not mention it," said Mr. Ivanohe. "From the depths of my heart I thank you for this great favor."

"This visit, my dear and generous lady," said Olga, "will be a bright page in our lives, and our good friend, who is so very fond of nature, as well as my brother and myself, shall never forget the magnificent sight of this grand villa so artistically and tastefully arranged, and forever shall we remember what my brother said—that there is not the least doubt in his mind that this place is charged with the highest thought emanations that affect for good those fortunate enough to come within its radius."

"This rare spot, Mme. Konrad," said Ernestine, "actually offers to the sight a magic aspect, or more correctly, it offers a sublime sight to the soul, for it reveals the goodness and omnipotence of the creator!"

"My dear friends," replied the lady, "I greatly appreciate your kind expressions. Yes, the goodness and omnipotence of the Creator are revealed all over creation, and there is no limit to beautify and improve it if the inhabitants are willing to perform their duties. Labor is the great factor, using its God-given talents for the embellishment of the beautiful mother earth. Before labor was applied this was like other places—an uncultivated desert. I know you understand me when I say that mother earth is like every other living thing. I am constantly impressed by this truth when I see one place showing its beauty and another its ugliness. The one is cultivated and improved; the other is neglected; and so it is with human beings, although they are the superior beings on earth. They can be wonderfully developed, and, if neglected, they remain

uncultivated savages. Under the blessed movement of Reconstruction labor will be applied so that it will be a healthy and agreeable occupation. There will be no lazy people, and then the ideal of one of our modern deep thinkers, who says: 'My ideal is frugality of body and opulence of mind.'—(R. B.)—will be verified. I would like to show you other places could you remain a little longer."

"We would consider it a great privilege," said Olga, "but we must return to school, and Miss Palmey has decided to visit some of her proteges. She does not like the idea of having her philanthropic work spoken of, I know, but I wish she would relate to Mme. Konrad the little story of the young chimney sweeper. You must not," turning to Ernestine, "feel embarrassed. I know the lady will like to hear it."

Mme. Konrad spoke words of encouragement and Ernestine began:

"Some time ago, after an abundant rain, having finished my work earlier than usual in the afternoon, as the air became clear and looked inviting, I took a walk in a direction I had never ventured to take. It led into a not much frequented path and at a certain distance I found myself in a forest. I had gathered a quantity of pretty wild flowers and was sitting on the fallen trunk of a tree, carefully arranging them, when I heard the echo of footsteps. I looked around but could see nothing, and after a while I heard the first words of that pathetic song, 'Spazzacammino.' The voice that sang it was strong and clear. I listened intently and could not explain the phenomena that made each word appear as if clothed with a life vibration. When the words, 'La mamma mia che mai fara,' pronounced with an intense feeling, reached my ear, I involuntarily started to my feet. A strong sense of attraction seized me, and, following the sound, I reached a place covered with thick shrubbery. I almost held my breath and moved more cautiously. On the ground I saw a ladder, a coil of rope and a scraper. I stopped and my eyes finally caught sight of a boyish form sitting at the foot of a large oak tree. His face was black from soot, and on his cheeks were two white lines from the eyes downward. The large, lustrous eyes seemed to give expression to his strong feelings and they seemed to change with the meaning of each word. When he repeated 'La mamma mia che mai fara' I saw the big tears uow down his cheeks. I stood like one fascinated. That poor, lonely

boy surely possessed the power, so to say, to project into visibility what his heart strongly felt. An indescribable expression came into the poor child's eyes as he raised and extended his arms, as if the object of the ardent desire of his heart were before him. I wondered if any distance could prevent the mother's heart from feeling the tender love of her child! He lowered his head and covered his face and I heard him sobbing. That spoke plainer than words of the hard and cheerless lot of the neglected children of the poor. I decided to approach him, and not until I was within a few steps of him did he remove his hands from his black, tearful face. When he saw me his first impulse was to run. I motioned, and spoke to him, to stay. Strong fear and alarm appeared on the poor face, but I finally succeeded in putting him at ease and asked him where his mother was. He timidly answered that she was at home in Lombardy. 'Is your padrone good to you?' I asked him. He hesitated; I asked him again. He reluctantly shook his head. 'Does he not treat you good?' He showed me some bruises on his limbs and body. 'Does your mamma know it?' 'Oh! no, no!' he cried, with an intense tone in his voice, while with a visible effort he controlled his tears. 'Where is your padrone?' I asked. Anxiously looking around, again showing fear on his countenance and trembling, he said: 'He told me he would come.' 'Are you hungry?' I asked again. 'I am always hungry,' he replied. My mind was full of thoughts of what to do, and quickly I told him, 'Come with me; I will take you where you will receive food and the care that a boy of your age needs.' He looked wildly around. 'Never mind,' I said, 'If he comes I will explain everything to him.' We walked out of the wood as fast as we could and I took him to the house of a family who are great benefactors and willing to help the needy. I explained the situation and made arrangements that the boy should be kept and provided for until I could see my way clear what to do for him. We discovered that the man who employed Enrico was cruel and a drunkard and I was determined that if any trouble should arise I would try my best to settle it. The next day I wrote to several parties and consulted with this faithful friend," pointing to Olga, "and the good news we often receive now is that the boy is a surprise to his teachers. They have discovered the gift he possesses and affirm that he will in time be one of the foremost orators of the age; that he unconsciously possesses the power to

vitalize his thoughts, and when he shall arrive at the age when he will wield that power consciously he will irresistibly sway his hearers and the people will marvel when they learn of the humble origin of the hungry chimney sweeper! This is the simple story," said Ernestine, modestly.

"And think, Mme. Konrad," said Miss Florence, "this good young lady has not only saved the poor chimney sweeper, but is the person I have reported to you as having saved the poor chamber servant who is now under your generous protection!"

"Miss Palmey," said Mme. Konrad, "you are a good young lady. You are following one of the great principles of the Reconstructive Movement and you will certainly be one of its prominent workers. Now that we are through with the breakfast, let us go to the next room and I will relate to you what have been to me also lessons of great value." When they were seated the lady began:

"About a year ago I was traveling in Italy, and arriving at a small town where we had to stop over night, I became aware that the people were much stirred up over a horrible crime that had been committed in one of the quarters where our inhuman social system compels the moral cripples to gather and increase the moral pestilence. The man who had been arrested for the crime was a Frenchman. The body of the murdered young man was found in close proximity to his dwelling. The Frenchman was middle-aged and had a strong vein for launching into enterprises. He owned a large tract of land and had erected one building after another until a large settlement, dedicated to uses of a low nature, sprung into existence. Great disorders were from time to time reported, but the public authorities—and, right here—rumors were circulated that the so-called public authorities not only closed their eyes and ears, but some of them were seen frequenting these places of iniquity. The crime I have mentioned would not have caused so much excitement had the victim been one of the miserable beings, but the young man was one of the favored sons of fortune. His parents were almost frantic with grief. A large reward was offered for the capture of the culprit. I was then, as I am now, greatly interested in social conditions, and decided to remain in that town and witness the court proceedings. My presence there attracted much attention. Had I been present from motives of curiosity,

I could not have endured the impertinent looks from some of the bystanders. I had a strong desire to see the man who possessed so much enterprise and made such poor use of it.

"In due time I saw him. He was a middle-sized man, a little hump-backed, bore a healthy complexion, had keen black eyes, black hair, an acquiline nose and an oval shaped face, and his mustache was black, sprinkled with gray. There was nothing to denote a depraved nature. To the questions that were put to him he answered in a firm and frank manner; he insisted that he was innocent. The process lasted for a long time. When not at the court room I was busy gathering all kinds of information in regard to that individual. I could not believe that he was guilty of that crime, and I knew that he could be turned into a useful member of society. Anyone less familiar with human nature would have scorned my ideas. His wife was an invalid and took little interest in what was going on. The big reward accomplished its work, the real criminal was caught and the Frenchman set at liberty. He did not return to his business at once, as everyone expected. For more than a week nothing was seen of him, which astonished everyone who knew how diligent and punctual he was. I went several times to his business place, disguised as an ordinary purchaser, and by indirect questioning I gained more and more information. Among other things I learned that he had an inventive turn of mind and had made several useful inventions, and had other good qualities. One day, as I was coming out of the store, I saw him coming at a quick pace. I stepped back and ordered something else, and while the clerk was preparing it I kept a sharp eye on the owner. He bore a troubled look on his face and I made up my mind to return some other day. When, after two days, I went again with the pretext of buying something, I found him in the store. He was very agreeable and serviceable, also very talkative. The troubled look had entirely disappeared and I found it not difficult to open a conversation, which I adroitly led to the subject which preoccupied my mind. He did not attempt to disguise matters. He blamed the people for not having assisted him to make that locality respectable. He had even built, at a heavy expense, a beautiful hall and had it decorated by the best artists that money could employ. At the opening he had everything arranged in a first-class style and had sent

invitations to people that could have given tone to the occasion; but what did he get in return for his trouble? The cold shoulder! Seeing that respectable people did not care to patronize him he turned his back on them and the result was, matters took that turn. 'I abhor the whole business myself,' he said, 'especially as my son is growing and the surroundings are bad, and as careful as I am to keep the true state of affairs from my invalid wife her remonstrances make me feel very guilty at times, and now, since the last unfortunate affair—— but what can I do?' 'Could you not dispose of the property and establish yourself in some other locality?' I suggested. 'That I could do,' he said, reflectively, 'but ——who are you?' he said suddenly, looking me straight in the face. In answer I gave him some circulars, asking him to read them carefully, and I would see him again. I thought I would give him time to consider everything, and proceeded on my journey. On my return I stopped again at the same town and I found several notes from him begging me to come to see him. When I entered the store he was waiting on a customer. He greeted me very respectfully and I noticed a tremor in his hands. After the customer left he gave a sigh of relief, and offering me a chair, asked me to be seated as he had so much to tell me. 'Do you really believe, Madame, that the social condition outlined in the papers you gave me can actually be realized?' he asked eagerly. 'I do, most assuredly,' I quietly replied. 'But what assurance is there to make you feel so confident?' 'The assurance that in their innermost hearts the people are good, and therefore naturally prefer good instead of evil.' 'But, Madame, is your faith not shaken, knowing something about my life, and the surroundings I have created. Ah! Madame,' he said, after a while, 'you must possess a noble soul; your presence works good in me. I feel my unworthiness, my ill-spent life, but I feel a strong desire to change its course. Never before have I realized this. I loathe this life and am determined to dispose of this property and enter into a respectable life, but I feel that I need the moral support of people disposed as you are to sustain my feeble attempts to atone for past failings and to remain firm and steady in the right path.' 'You shall find everything you need,' I said, 'and when your environments are changed your strength will unfold, keeping pace with your desire to do good.' He was deeply touched, and, to make the story short, he sold the property

and he and his family moved into a town I had suggested, where reformers lived. I heard that his wife regained her health and is today a zealous worker in our movement. The son has enjoyed a first-class education, is a good mechanic and assists his father in his many useful inventions, and both are ardent supporters of our reform doctrines. Before I left that town it was my good fortune to help and bring peace and happiness into another family. It is one of my habits to go wherever I can to study life in all its phases. I visit churches with the same purpose. One morning I entered an old but well preserved structure. It was richly decorated. The statues of saints were fine works of art; gold and silver had been used without stint. I had taken a seat when a bowed figure appeared who went to kneel down in front of me. She was praying fervently and now and then a heavy sigh came from her oppressed heart. I watched her, and in the meantime two other women entered. One came and knelt close by me. After she was seated I begged her to tell me if she knew who the person was in front of us. She looked at her with a gesture of pity and told me the sad story. It was a poor mother who had lost one son and that another was breaking her heart by fast becoming an incorrigible drunkard. 'Where do they live?' I asked, and taking out my note book wrote down the address. 'Is the young man doing anything, and how old is he?' 'He is twenty years old and works in a butcher shop.'

"Again I wrote down the address where the boy worked and thanked the woman. The first thing after leaving the church I went in search of the butcher shop and my mind was made up to visit it the next day, and so I did. When I entered the door there were two men grappling together in the middle of the shop. I saw at once what the trouble was. One was intoxicated while the other was trying to force him out. The one under the influence of drink was a tall, slim young man, his curly blond hair and rosy complexion made him appear a mere boy. His high forehead, large brown eyes, fine shaped nose, thin lips and well formed mouth denoted the idealistic nature which seemed entirely out of place in that dingy room with sawdust-covered floor and dead flesh-covered walls.

"The other man was a short, nervous, quick-motioned individual, his appearance completely the opposite of the young man. When he perceived me he led him to a bench and made him sit

down, muttering something into his ear, and quickly stepping behind the counter was ready to wait upon the customer. Before asking for anything I enquired if the young man was indisposed. 'He is dead drunk, that's what he is,' the butcher answered. 'I have bothered with him all I am going to—the good-for-nothing! I am not going to stand it any longer, he will have to hunt for another job, or I am not the butcher on corner B.' He was very angry and I felt very sorry for the young man. A quick thought flashed through my mind and I said: 'I am a total stranger to you both, and what I am going to propose to you may—well, I hope you will approve it—I should never forgive myself if I should not make an effort to rescue a young life from sure ruin. Now, I will ask you a favor. Let him rest until the bad effects disappear. Do not abuse him. Have a little patience and I will take care of him.' I did not know what the man thought. He looked strangely, first at me and then at the boy, his lips moved as if he were saying something but he could not formulate it into words. I looked steadily at him and he finally said: 'All right.' I left the place, and, when through with my other errands returned to the shop. The boy was not in sight and the owner was not present, and I asked the clerk where the young man was. 'He went home,' he answered. Hearing that I went straight to the house, and as I arrived I saw the same care-worn, grief-burdened woman I had seen at the church. Her eyes looked red and swollen. As she stood at the door I asked her: 'Will you permit a stranger to enter and speak to you of something that lies near to your heart?' Very courteously she asked me to come in and offered me a chair and soon I learned of her and her husband's long struggles, the loss of her beloved son, and the last and greatest sorrow—the waywardness of the only child that remained to them. After many enquiries it did my heart good to notice the relief and the change in the sad face as she unburdened her mind and found a sympathetic response from her strange visitor. I positively stated that a complete change of surroundings would make it possible to bring to the surface the many, but latent, good qualities of mind and heart in the young man. 'Your son,' I said, 'possesses an idealistic nature, and if assisted he will rise to a higher realm, but if surrounded by coarse and unspiring environments his idealistic nature must starve, for he is not positive enough to climb unaided.

What is absolutely necessary is to find out what he is naturally fitted for and then bend our efforts to place him in the right position.' The mother's face was a study. It beamed with brightness, and then, as if thoughts of doubt flashed through her mind, shadows appeared and disappeared in rapid succession. 'I have,' I told her, 'from the moment I saw your son decided to leave no stone unturned to save him. It is the mission to which, with many others, I have devoted my life, and now, please tell me, what are the strongest inclinations you have noticed in him?'

"'He does not seem to have inclination for anything since he has been put, first in a baker shop, which made him feel despondent, and since he changed and was employed in the butcher shop he went from bad to worse. I can show you what, before that, used to take up his whole attention and fill him with contentment.'

"She went to a clothes press and brought out drawings, carvings in wood, models in clay, and so forth. 'His father,' she said, 'could see no use in foolish things like that. He would scold him till the poor boy did not dare to touch them, and he dropped everything when he was compelled to work in the dingy baker shop, and later, with the other change in his occupation, came the evil transformation in his whole being. He is no more what he used to be, and it has cast a dark shadow over my life which leaves nothing for me to hope for!' Copious tears flowed down the afflicted mother's cheeks. 'Nothing is lost, as yet,' I said. 'I feel convinced that an artistic career will re-awaken his better nature and stimulate his entire being into new life and activity.' 'Thank you! Thank you,' she exclaimed. 'Providence must have sent you.' She had folded her hands and was looking at me, her grateful soul in her eyes. I had heard the second time someone calling her, the third time it reached her ear and she started to her feet. 'He is calling me,' she said, looking anxious and not knowing what to do. 'Keep quiet,' I said. 'His mind may not be clear enough today. I will come tomorrow; have him remain at home, give him these leaflets to read, and let us hope for the best.'

"The whole matter was so unexpected and new that the poor woman could express no words when I finally took leave of her. The next day I found mother and son anxiously awaiting my coming. The mother impressively said that the mere mention of a change, and the reading of what I had given for him, seemed to have

brought back her boy's former self! He did not wait for the formality of an introduction, but impulsively came forward with his hand extended to me. I took his hand and told him how glad I was to see him, and again I took notice of his finely developed brain, and again I was impressed that the young man, when following his right vocation, and after having his character rightly developed, would represent a noble—a true personality! I entered freely into the plans I had considered. He was to enter the academy of fine arts and I would see to it that he be favored with the best opportunities to assure a successful career. 'I do not have the honor to know who you are, Madame,' he said, 'and everything you have said is so good that I can hardly realize that I am awake. It seems too good to be true.' 'I am only one among the many workers who are trying to reconstruct the world. You, in turn, if you are faithful in your new calling, can become a powerful instrument to help this great cause. Here is my card; at the right time you will be notified. Here I have some literature; please read it carefully and when through, distribute it where you know it will do the most good.' Every arrangement was carried on as rapidly as possible and in proper time the young man entered the academy, where he is now pursuing his studies, giving full satisfaction to his teachers and filling his mother's heart with gladness at the steady progress he is making in all branches of the fine arts. As I said, they were lessons of great value, and I could relate some more had we more time. I would like to hear your opinion, Mr. Ivanohe."

"Madame Konrad, those lessons are of great value, not only to the performers of the noble work, but to every listener whose heart has become tender toward his fellow beings and begins to understand the sublime principles of the Reconstructive Movement. My spirit feels a great revival, my heart is stimulated to greater actions. The only cause that produces the evil effects that degenerate mankind is what every true reformer claims—it is the wrong system established and upheld by the low human propensities. Recently I read an article in a Bulletin which said: 'Reading the history of any land one cannot help saying: What fools the common people were in those days! The poor, distracted, gullible common people!' Now, my good friends, you know the reason why the so-called common people were in that deplorable condition. We are told again and

again that if the clergy wished to keep the common people in subjection it was not best to tell them that the Divine Being filled them with Its own life, substance, intelligence and love as full as it filled Osiris and Isis. 'For century after century they were enslaved, whipped, robbed, outraged, despised and murdered,' says the Bulletin. Now, tell me, being kept in ignorance, was it possible for them to realize their greatness and the power to resist their oppressors?"

"Certainly not," replied the ladies.

"But let us rejoice and continue in this great reform, for already there are great signs that the common people are discovering their power, and therefore, after centuries of blindness, overcoming it by cultivating their intelligence and understanding their true being, they will establish what will save them forever—the Divine Principle of the Fatherhood of God and the Brotherhood of Men."

"We share your hopes and your convictions," enthusiastically exclaimed the ladies.

"It has already been shown how deep the principles of liberty and equality were rooted in the hearts of the true patriots in the new republic of America. Equality and liberty for the great human family, those natural demands alone will awaken in their hearts the good qualities when fully granted. We hear how the common people have already learned a great deal. In France, the poor, foolish common people acted that stupendous epic, the French revolution. In France, Switzerland and the United States they have discovered their power and established a measure of equality and liberty. Think of the inspiring sentence in the United States 'Declaration of Independence,' 'The self-evident truth that all just powers of government are derived from the consent of the governed.' Think of the spirit of independence, the love of liberty expressed in the words of Patrick Henry, spoken in the very halls of royalty: 'I know not what course others may take, but as for me, give me liberty or give me death!' Think of the liberty-loving men who were ready to face death rather than submit to the usurping authority of kings and rulers! No wonder, then, if the statement made in a reform paper—that the so-called common people, after ages of blindness and folly, are slowly coming into their own, shall be verified. A senator in that country—Mason, I believe—said: 'This sentence has been a pillar of fire by night and a cloud by

day to the down-trodden all over the world. In the light of this sentence crowns have fallen to the dust and men have stood anew in their manhood. In the realization of that all-important truth, Simon Bolivar, the liberator of South America, established the foundation stone of the American republic. In the light of that sentence, Kosciusko led his brave band against the hosts of the Russian and Austrian oppressors of his native land!' Oh, how I wish that the Destructive Movement would adopt the best and safest remedies to overcome the evils—by education instead of destruction! I have received an article recently which did me good, seeing that some clergymen are presenting matters in the true light, but the Destructive Movement plainly shows in the letter in which was enclosed the article, that they are growing fiercer. I will read it to you. One clergyman said: 'The workingman is often unmercifully scored because he is not a regular attendant at church. Perhaps there are a great many workingmen who do not go regularly to places of worship, but it is not because of a lack of reverence for the principles of Christianity. It is rather because of a feeling that they are not welcome in all of the churches, and it is not an unfounded excuse when they give this as a reason for non-attendance. That there are some ministers who know that money and good appearance are more recognized in some churches than a desire to worship God is made apparent by the sermon delivered by Dr. B. W. T. His subject was 'The Golden Fetters of the Church.' In the course of his sermon Dr. T. gave utterance to the following: 'I impeach the church today because she prefers the riches of the world rather than the riches of Jesus of Nazareth. I impeach the church today because she has imbibed the spirit of commercialism to the exclusion of the spirit of Christian humility. I impeach the church for forsaking the simplicity of the earlier days and becoming aristocratic and haughty and in showing forth to men that the badge of her aristocracy is not the blood-stained cross of service, but the vulgar dollar mark of the exchange and of the market place. She approaches the millionaires with greater reverence than she approaches the footstool of the most high God! She has built her institutions by popular subscription, but the poor get scant courtesy within their walls. She has posed before man as peace-maker and arbiter, and yet today she is absolutely without influence in the great industrial battles between capital and labor! She has drawn

around her the mantle of arrogance and exclusiveness and passes on her way sublimely unconscious of the gibes and jests of by-standers. She patronizingly proffers her cheap advice to the poor to be content with a lower station in life, while she bends the hinges of the knee to the rich man and flatters his ambition to be wealthier still. It is for these very reasons,' says the above-mentioned clergyman, 'that the church has lost her influence with thousands of common people, and the earlier she takes it upon herself to eliminate money-worship and take up the path of poverty—(this sentence has upset the Brotherhood of Destruction—the idea that the ministers know nothing but to jump from one extreme to the other)—penitence and prayer, the more quickly will the common people flock to her banners.' I must admit myself that they are mistaken, but I hope that after we send them our reform literature, if they are truly honest and sincere, it will plainly appear to them as it unmistakably appears to every one of us, that nothing but the change of the unjust and wrong system can save not only the poor and common people, but the whole human race."

"You are perfectly right, Mr. Ivanohe," said Ernestine. "Is that another article from my native country?"

"Yes, Miss, I am glad to say it is, and, considering it very carefully, I think it is a good sign, for you know in order to cure evils they must be uncovered."

"Yes," said the hostess, "and the events that will pass in the twentieth century will give a very different form to the state of affairs. The clergymen are thundering forth accusations against American women, stating that three-fourths of the crime and poverty and depravity found in America are due to women. Some of the women, the press reports, protest and resent it. One woman said that men are to blame, for they have made the political, financial, religious and educational system to which women have been subjected ever since, and another woman protesting says that crime and poverty are the result of social conditions. The press also reports that Bishop L. said inferentially that men have made a mess of it, and he, hence, indirectly argues that women be given a chance to make their own environment—that, as a rule, where women are free and untrammeled to act their influence is for the best. Very true, the social conditions produce the crimes and human suffering, and why should women remain so indifferent? Simply because they

do not yet comprehend the situation, and at times it seems very strange why they do not comprehend it, and until they do the crimes cannot be conquered. I suppose you have read that a congress is being held in one of the cities on this continent to discuss what is called the 'white slave trade.' Think of the horror that this 'white slave trade' is carried on on a great scale and has become an evil of international importance! It is conducted under the guise of emigration, many young girls leaving their homes, supposedly for America and ending in dives in Paris, London and other European cities, and some are taken across the Atlantic, but only to a life of shame in the greater American cities. Think how poor girls are brought away from Russia by the train load, and that there has been no effort made to stop the abominable traffic! Again and again we are reminded that the ancient world has succumbed to two evils—slavery and immorality. In the congress they promise to support measures which may be suggested against the 'white slave trade.' But in the name of the Almighty good what measures will abolish that abominable traffic except it be by a complete change of the present evil system? Not the thundering accusations against women, but the needful enlightenment, as practiced by the Reconstructive Movement, will awaken womankind and through their powerful influence will the events that will appear in the twentieth century be new and glorious!"

"God bless you," exclaimed the young friends.

"And I will repeat the prophetic words of Charles Kingsley," said Miss Florence, " 'That one principal cause of the failure of so many magnificent schemes, social, political, religious, which have followed each other age after age, has been this: That in almost every case they have ignored the rights and powers of one-half of the human race. And politics will not go right, society will not go right, religion will not go right, that nothing human will ever go right except in so far as women go right.' "

"Very, very true," said Mme. Konrad, "and now, please tell me, young ladies, at what time will you start toward the city?"

"According to our arrangements the vehicle will arrive within half an hour," said Olga.

"I must not forget," said the lady, "that Miss Armida felt sorry she could not return from the private school in time to bid you good by."

"Oh, we shall never forget her," said Olga.

"We shall soon see her again," joined Ernestine, "and we send her our best and most hearty wishes."

"So do I," said Mr. Ivanohe, and very impressively he continued: "I wish—and I know you all share the same desire—that we could pierce the future and obtain a glimpse of the portentous changes that are silently being evolved. Many have been the changes that this good mother earth has witnessed, but the one that is maturing will eclipse them all! Delving into the pages of the world's history our thoughts reach a focus which compels us to learn what will be the future destiny of the nations, and then we will all feel the strengthening power derived from the earnest and sincere striving for the betterment of human conditions. I will accompany my sister and Miss Palmey to the city, and from there my next mission will be at the German frontier. You will please accept my sincere, heartfelt thanks, Mme. Konrad, for this kind and generous act."

"And we express heartily the same feelings," said Ernestine and Olga, "and if you allow us we will prepare ourselves and be ready for the appointed hour." And when the hour finally arrived they were all deeply moved and parted in the most friendly way.

When the travelers reached the city brother and sister separated very reluctantly, and the young man respectfully asked permission to continue the correspondence with Miss Palmey, which the young girl gladly granted. When the two ladies were alone Olga asked:

"Was not this trip very beneficial, having come in contact with persons possessing such rare intelligence?"

"Indeed it was," replied Ernestine, "and after we have passed this uphill part of our way I will tell you what I saw. I have been pondering over it a great deal, but I cannot obtain a satisfactory idea of its meaning."

CHAPTER XIII.

"Here we are," said Olga, "now tell me."

"Before I speak," said Ernestine, looking straight into her friend's eyes, "I ask you to promise me not to mention a word of it to your brother."

"I always willingly do what you ask me to," answered Olga, and Ernestine began:

"I saw the world apparently lose its basis or foundation. I do not mean the material world, you understand. From all parts of the known earth arose the people who had taken to heart the distress and suffering of their fellow beings, and with ready hearts and willing hands they were offering and applying every remedy that the situation demanded. But every remedy seemed to fall short, and all efforts brought no relief. Untold calamities were in sight, such as the world had never witnessed before, and it caused dismay to every heart. Mysterious whisperings filled the atmosphere, suggesting what a complete change the methods employed by the great movement called the Brotherhood of Reconstruction would bring into being, and in the midst of that great consternation appeared before my vision a young man and a young woman, apparently ready to lead the great movement, and when I tell you that the young man was your brother——"

"——and the young woman was you!" cried Olga.

"Hush!" said Ernestine, excitedly. "And now," she continued, "you understand the embarrassment that seized me. And I beg of you again, do not mention a word to your brother."

"I renew my promise, but with the deepest desire in my heart I shall pray that your vision be verified," said Olga, affectionately pressing her friend's hand.

They arrived safely at their destination and after having visited Ernestine's proteges, and the school having started again, they faithfully engaged in their various tasks and their weekly meetings were more interesting than ever, they having so much news to impart to each other.

At one of the evening meetings Olga saw that her friend had

several letters and two magazines in her hand. When they were seated Ernestine said that the first thing they would do would be to read two very contrasting articles concerning women, and she began:

"An extract from the J. Patriot, J. M.: 'In a previous article we have referred to cyclic changes that came during the last quarter of the preceding century. Of our remarkable nineteenth century not the least eventful circumstance is the advent of Christian Science. That it should be the work of a woman is the natural outcome of a period notable for woman's emancipation from many of the thraldoms, prejudices, superstitions and oppressions of the past.' Here is another: 'Just as the tumult of war was subsiding and the freedom of man had been established, there began in L—, Massachusetts, the crusade for a higher liberty. Julia Ward Howe had written the 'Hymn of the Republic;' Mrs. Livermore had done the work of love in the hospitals, and many other devoted mothers and sisters of men had shown that it was woman's hour. It was not strange, then, that through a woman should come the discovery which announced to this age the healing power of truth, and gave to Christendom the philosophy and method whereby the brotherhood of men will be established. The time seems propitious to call for woman's help in the tremendous task of Reconstruction. Let us hope and pray that they may come to a timely realization of the importance of devoting their influence to the service of humanity!'"

"I would like to send these extracts to my brother," said Olga; "I know he will appreciate them, and you will not object, I know."

"Certainly not," answered Ernestine, "but now, you read this and I know you will feel as I do—that the brotherhood of men cannot be established, nor can women be emancipated until the present wrong system is changed." And Olga read: "Sins of the Smart Set"— "The Rev. Dr. W. C. R. has asserted from his pulpit that society's vices are a menace to the institutions of the country. He says that young women high in social life drink, smoke and gamble. This was asserted from a pulpit in Philadelphia and the same assertions have been made of the smart set of other cities. 'Satan still some mischief finds for idle hands to do,' wrote Watt a long time ago. The exclusive, idle, wealthy set have nothing to do. They suffer from satiety. They crave excitement. The women drink to stimulate jaded nerves. They gamble to pass the time and to obtain

some enthusiasm. They smoke because they began it as a fad and continue because they cannot stop. Since the dawn of history the smart set has perverted the standards of life. The '400' of Ninevah and Babylon were no worse than those of Rome and decadent France. Fielding and Smallet, and later Thackery, tell us of the low moral average of high society in England. Nothing less than decadence can be expected from this class. They have withdrawn from the strength and joy of labor. They are weaklings, physical, moral, mental, and they live a life of gross materialism.'"

"Is it not strange," said Olga, "that neither the daily press, nor the preachers, and perhaps not even the woman who discovered Christian science, do not suggest and uphold the only remedy which alone can abolish the moral diseases which degenerate humanity? Why! oh, why! do they not study the great saving principles of the Reconstructive Movement?"

"Indeed, it is very strange," said Ernestine, "and here I am puzzled as to the contents of my mother's letter. Listen: 'My Daughter: Your father and I have finally decided that you must come home. We want you to stop your studies abroad. Not a single day passes but we must endure undeserved reproaches. The strongest reason for our sudden determination to have you return home you will learn from the enclosed clipping. From it you will see that everybody is on the qui vive. Vague rumors of outsiders, but a positive fact for the 'high set' who will have the privilege of a visit from one of the most prominent members of the Russian nobility. You may well imagine the fever of excitement that is spreading among the families of the '400.' We have had some such events before, but this is to surpass them all, and this one shall not pass without our making the greatest effort to have our daughter outshine every other girl and—you know, it is the rage these days to secure a titled husband for the millionaires' daughters. So do not attempt to plead for a prolonged absence. Within three months you must be under your father's roof."

"Now read this one," said Olga, handing her letter to Ernestine. She took it, and as she proceeded her face flushed. When she got through she said, half reproachfully:

"If your brother is the noble gentleman my mother alludes to in her letter I hope it is the play of hazard, for I cannot believe that

he is in any way directly concerned in the affairs my mother mentions."

"He certainly is not, my dear," said Olga. "We know he has for a long time been wishing to visit America and acquaint himself with the country he so greatly loves and admires, and very likely some of the papers got hold of it and started the rumor. My brother's idea, as you see in the letter, is to visit every city of consequence in the United States. I must own that at the thought that my brother and my dearest friend will be so far away I cannot countenance the thought of remaining here alone."

"You do not object to accompanying your friend to America, do you?" said Ernestine, with a tender expression in her lovely countenance.

"I hardly dared to put my thoughts into words," said Olga, "and now, the sooner the day arrives for our departure the greater shall be my joy!"

"Oh, here is a letter from our friend Florence," said Ernestine, "and listen, Mme. Konrad has projected an excursion to the United States of America, and she is the lucky being to accompany her!"

"Is it possible!" exclaimed Olga. "Why, think of the unexpected news—the delightful news!"

"I will write to her this evening," said Ernestine. "I will inform her of the order that came from my home and enquire if our company will be acceptable to her. So I will leave you, with a hearty good night."

The warm and cordial answer from Mme. Konrad, which arrived in due time, set the hearts of the two girls aglow.

"Now, my good friend," said Ernestine, "we have at least two months during which we can crowd a good deal into our minds. Let us take everything calmly and keep up our studies."

"That we will do, but I must own that my thoughts will require a good deal of disciplining—they will, in spite of all efforts, be flying across the big ocean."

The two friends kept their word. They pursued their studies with indefatigable zeal.

"Look at this document," said Olga, as she entered Ernestine's room on one of their evening meetings. "Guess where it came from?"

"I should say from your brother," she answered, looking at it critically.

"You are correct, and there is reading enough to last—I won't say how long. Come, let us start at once," and they went to their accustomed place.

"The dear brother. With his busy life how can he find time to write so much! Here he begins: 'My dear sister: It is a solemn occasion for us Europeans when we first cast our sight on the shore of 'the land of the free and the home of the brave!' When the anxious longing is finally to be realized and we set our feet on that portion of mother earth which is not desecrated with the presence of kings and tyrants, supported and upheld by hirelings, ready to enforce the demands of their masters with bayonets and canons! The precious sensation of freedom must be experienced in order to be appreciated. My heart and soul were waving sky-high, impelled by the ideas—the immortal ideas—expressed by the lovers of mankind who founded a free nation—a nation of free people—free from the unbearable monarchial yoke! Had their liberty-loving spirits not given it a mortal blow this vast hemisphere would be infected, as is our continent, with the abominable monarchial regime which nips in its bud every step toward true progression and permanent happiness. This blessed nation, free from the scourge of militarism! Big fleets and big armies which our deluded people have been trained to believe were the greatness and glory of their nations! The next day after my arrival I was walking, my mind filled with delightful thoughts, when, to my astonishment, I perceived two men walking very fast, and as they reached me they called me by my name. I stood still, looking from one to the other. It did not last long. A sign was given me and I recognized them as members of the Brotherhood of Destruction. 'We knew of your coming,' they said, apologetically, 'and you being a stranger in a strange land we took the liberty to come and offer you our services.'

"'I accept your explanation,' I said, 'but I shall be frank and tell you that not every person can experience a friendly feeling toward an organization which undertakes the task of shadowing the members of other organizations, especially when their aims are as far apart as ours are; but I will take it for granted that your motives are honorable and I thank you for the interest you have shown toward me.' 'I presume,' said one of them, 'you are not aware of

the high esteem and respect every member of our organization entertains toward the head member of the Reconstructive Movement. We were instructed, if you do not object, to conduct you to a comfortable quarter where you will have the chance to meet some of our most zealous workers, who will consider it a great favor to meet a man whose name is honored and cherished for the nobility and greatness of his character.' I thanked them for their generous intentions, but my quarters had already been engaged and, although a stranger in one sense, in another I expected to meet a considerable number of co-workers who had taken hold of the progressive ideas of the age. 'We hope,' they said as we walked along, 'that when you come face to face with the conditions in this apparently free country, you may consider the methods advocated by our brotherhood as the only ones that will meet the exigencies of the hour. When you come face to face with the countless number of unemployed, the dreadful conditions in the sweat shops, humanity brutalized, resulting from man's cruelty to man, you may stand still and ponder where to find a foundation upon which to build your Reconstructive Movement!'

"'I can see,' I replied, 'that the sight of so much injustice and cruelty appeals strongly for redress. I know that your hearts are not appealed to in vain, and it is often my soul's desire that for the relief of so much existing evil both brotherhoods would unite their formidable working forces. Both are true and sincere, but both follow opposite directions, and therefore both are determined to follow the road that appears to them the best. This blessed country has shown to the world what liberty enables mankind to achieve. In spite of the many obstacles, can anyone fail to see the marvelous results of popular freedom? You know that the masses of people in Europe are too ignorant to throw off the burden of dynasties and of standing armies and navies.' 'But do you not know,' eagerly said one, 'that the great capitalists are becoming more conspicuous and many have gained their wealth by fraud or gambling and many have corrupted the courts of the country?' 'I know—yes I know—what you say,' I replied, 'but why can you not see the signs which are so clear that the people are getting ready to abolish and overcome the barriers that prevent their advancement, and the clearer they realize their dignity as human beings, the stronger will be their demand and the sooner will they obtain

their full liberty?' 'My good man,' said the other companion, 'It will not take you long to find out the full drift of things in this country and you will not only hear, but see, the works of this damnable capitalist system. You will see how everything is developing more and more into cheating. You will see that capitalists already number themselves—like the monarchs do—as the Christian men to whom God in his infinite wisdom has entrusted the interests of this country. What is your Reconstructive Movement going to do? Will it not prevent the people from obtaining their rights?' 'No, on the contrary, the principles of our movement will arouse in the human heart the moral power which alone can establish the ideal social system! We see, as you do, and as the people used to see in the past, 'the wild sea of tyranny and oppression,' but our efforts will be to enlighten and convert the people, and not to destroy them.'

"Here," I said, "I have a little article which contains a great truth, and I am glad to hear that many clergymen in this country are ready to adopt the principles of this great reform movement, and this article was written by one of those. Listen: 'It is true that some ideas produce spiritual depression. There is dyspepsia of the soul, as well as of the body. Your thoughts may force you into a perfect purgatory, and keep you there until you change your mental outlook. The apple seed never grows to become a pear tree, and the low thought never results in a high life. The level of your thinking decides the level of your living, because one is cause and the other effect. Love, and you will be loved; hate, and you will be hated. Your attitude toward others is the sure indication of their attitude toward you, and the way in which you bear yourself toward the world is the product of your conviction as to your duty to be kind and helpful, or your determination to selfishly get all you can at whatever cost to others.—Rev. G. H.' I have another article which states how the financial world undermines the health of the 'money kings.' No wonder that the two extreme classes of the present social system suffer—the capitalists and the poor—but our hope is strong that those two extremes will disappear as soon as they understand the truth, which will make them free, and let us not forget what Fourier, who discovered the vice of capitalism, said, that 'In society, the degree of woman's emancipation is the natural measure of the general emancipation.' Upon women's intelligent

and conscientious actions more than upon anything else will depend the success of our movement, and I intend to make a careful study of what they have accomplished in this country, because this will show the great fact that by their own exertion they have obtained the rights which are indispensable for human development. Of course, thus far they have not obtained their full emancipation, but all depends upon their continuance in the reform work. I am sorry,' I said, 'but here we must part, as this is the place where I am expected.'

"The two gentlemen bowed and handed me a card, at the same time giving me a pressing invitation to visit them at the quarter designated on the card. Thanking them, we parted in a very friendly way."

"This is one chapter," said Olga, "and I think we have time to read some more."

"'I am very agreeably surprised. This is the election year. What a stir! I wish I could repeat to you, word by word, the speeches I heard by two ladies. To say that they carried their audiences with the logic and incisiveness of their arguments is putting it very mildly. There is something inspiring in the presence of a woman who is imbued with the importance and weight of national matters. It forcibly reminded me of the meeting I attended in Milano, Italy, when that great champion of morality, Signorina M., addressed an audience composed largely of young dudes, who had gathered with the intention of sneering her out of the hall, but who left with eyes moistened by emotions they were not aware of possessing. I am learning that there are no questions of importance in which these intelligent women do not take an active part, and am very glad to say that whatever they undertake, they carry it on successfully. They are workers in many branches, and how easily their good influence penetrates everywhere. If the world has not had thus far a solid foundation upon which to build the ideal society, it is owing to the equivocal position assigned to women by the short-sighted men. It is extremely gratifying to note the effects of popular government. You remember the great [illegible] to conceal the quarters of meeting of the Brotherhood of Destruction? In this country, although they are cautious, there is nothing to remind one of the manner in which they are conducted in Europe. The men and women engaged in that line of work show

that their bitterest attacks are against existing methods, rather than against persons. They are very familiar with European history, and I think if the whole people of this fortunate country would——. Well, I declare, this very moment I receive a letter from that brotherhood, and as I opened it, the first thing I saw was an article entitled, 'Industrial War Just Ahead!' I send it to you."

"This must be it," said Ernestine, as she picked it up.

"Yes," said Olga. "Now you read it, please; it must be a good article or he would not have sent it."

"Very well," replied Ernestine, and began:

"'A religious minister, in a sermon, speaking of the industrial chaos that prevails, and the insulting claims of the monopolists that they hold and control by 'Divine right,' what the people need for their existence and comfor, said: 'Religion teaches that a man's property is not his own, but is merely held by him in trust for the benefit of all. The powerful ones of earth should realize that we are in the midst of the same conditions that existed in France and which brought on the revolution. The rich and powerful classes in France refused to take warning from what was going on about them and relied upon the power which they fancied they had. The revolution came like the eruption of a volcano, and we in America should take warning. The earth belongs to God, and not to individual men. Therefore, whatever man produces, should be administered for the benefit of all, and not for that of the selfish few. The proper social condition is not one where men crush down the multitude and disregard their claims, but where wealth is so distributed that social well-being is within the reach of all honest and virtuous men. Right now we are standing over a volcano which may burst forth when least expected. The security of men who despise the down-trodden burden-bearers is a fancied security.'"

"Great heavens!" exclaimed Olga, "can we blame the members of the Destructive Movement, when they see the foolishness of talking only about the landlordism of Europe! Excuse me, go on."

"'In times past the police and military forces of the country have been willing to protect them. They forget that those forces are drawn from the ranks of the very people they are now oppressing, and that their sympathies are naturally with their own people. Therefore, if they continue to disregard the wishes of the people

and to fling insults at them, the time will come when their calls for protection will fall upon unheeding ears. It is a saddening thought that a 'captain of industry' could become so inflated with his own arrogance as to lay God-given claim to his holdings upon the earth. Such a man is but fanning the smouldering embers of hate, discontent and unrest, so that the prosperity for which he hopes will pay the penalty. If they are temporarily successful in their oppression, they must expect the discontent and hatred of the conquered to continue to rankle and to burst forth anew as soon as the oppressed have rested and recruited their strength.'

"Well, well," said Ernestine, "I must repeat what others say, and to which I think you will agree: Why do the clergymen tell these stories at an almost endless length, and yet do not suggest the great necessity of adopting the saving principles of the Reconstructive Movement? The wrong interpretation of religion is the cause of the evils he describes. Think for one moment what he says—that a man's property is not his own, but is merely held by him in trust for the benefit of all."

"That is too ridiculous," said Olga. "Why can they not understand that the owning of worldly goods is what stimulates greediness, ambition and selfishness? Did not the unselfish, good man of Nazareth tell the young man to sell all his goods and follow him? I tell you, when the property shall be in the trust of all, as our movement teaches, then, and then only, will the benefit be for all."

"Bravo! bravo!" said Ernestine," now, please go on and read your brother's letter."

"I will. Here I am:

"'——would acquaint themselves with the historical events of the European continent, they could not help but become more ardent lovers of popular freedom. Then their vigilance would not cease day or night, and they would pave the path that would lead to the attainment of the great human unfoldment! I have listened with great surprise to a lengthy speech delivered by another very bright woman. She moved her audience with a power that was irresistable. The scenes of deprivation, over-work and the lack of human kindness she had witnessed with her own eyes, aroused within her a torrent of deep sympathy. The word pictures she presented would convince anyone that the system of cruel exploitation, 'the few grasping and controlling what Providence intended should be shared

by all His children,' was what made the world a vale of tears and despair. 'As a rule,' she continued,—and here she assumed an attitude as of one who spoke with authority—'the whole responsibility is cast upon men!' Not until I devoted years of observation, with the impartiality born of the desire for justice, have I reached the conclusion which today I hold as indisputable. The cause—the main cause—for the sad condition existing in the world, is man's lack of knowledge or assumed pride, which has caused him to ignore, to undervalue, to oppress woman, to consider her a secondary, insignificant factor in every department of life. In the home she is considered by many an object provided for man's gratification. In the affairs called public, she has until recently been entirely ignored. In religion likewise. Socially, she has been encouraged to play the silly part of the butterfly, and so on. In public affairs woman was excluded from any direct participation which required sober thought and developed ideas for the common good; her influence was perverted, and she either stimulated the lower ambitions in man, or, like him, became entirely indifferent. In religion, having from childhood been taught that man only is fit for that sacred calling, her spirit has accepted the place assigned her by man, and she has remained narrow, conservative and incapable, therefore, of lifting herself above the material plane, and thus held the race down to the same level. Men have caused rivers of blood to flow upon earth; they have incited and kept alive the spirit of hatred and revenge of one nation against another. Men have kept nations and people divided, misusing the very means by which they could have become united and strengthened into the acknowledgment of a universal brotherhood. Each religious creed boasted of being the only gate through which a safe passage into heaven could be obtained. Men have openly shown the grasping and bloody hand, from feudal time to this time, in one form or another, they have openly played the role of heartless tyrants. All the odium and execration has been hurled at their heads. In this very time, when one of the greatest crises is casting its shadow upon the world, only the deepest thinkers are discovering the hidden cause, and the surest remedy to avert the threatning cataclysm. Men are combining their greedy heads, and planning how to control and gain possession of the products of their fellow beings' toil, and sacrifices of their life energies. But, who is the feeder of this material greed; who silences the pro-

test of their conscience; who smooths the tumultuous thoughts raised by the bitter complaints of the exploited; who feeds the unholy ambitions, and lives in idleness and luxury, caring little or nothing by what channels flow the means by which their notions might be gratified? To many my assertion may sound exaggerated, but to such ones I would say, investigate first, and approve or disapprove afterwards. In a plain term I will say that the hidden cause is woman! And next, that the surest remedy is to reach woman's heart and conscience, and thereby obtain and enlist their great influence in the right direction! Have them realize their true being so thoroughly that they will no longer be an instrument of evil. In this country of ours, the spirit of equity, of equality, would have improved its vivifying, uplifting powers, had woman not become absorbed in worldliness. How long would the dividing lines of aristocracy in the old continent have lasted if women were made to realize the folly and emptiness of their assumd positions as superior beings? Men were often tired of the empty conventionalities, and gladly would have thrown off the yokes, but women would obstinately cling to them. Women's misconception of life has been, to bask in splendor, and over-awe and dazzle others by it! Think of the joy of some of those women, which knows no bounds, when they are appointed honorary colonels of a regiment of soldiers, dressed in full regimentals, which exalts and popularizes the barbarous, liberty-destroying institution—the army! How many are ready to say that the influence of women is not felt in the slaughter and human carnage—the bloody wars?

"A sad example is on record in this country by our southern women, for the war spirit of the southern women was fiercer than that of the men!

"Women must finally understand that the regeneration of the race depends in a great measure upon them, and the grandest example shown in our twentieth century woman's power ought to be given to the world by the women of this country! They owe this great duty to humanity, because in no other country under the sun are women blessed with so much freedom. The women of this country are reminded again and again that the eyes of the women of the whole world are turned longingly toward this country. No women in the world bear the stamp of independence, the air of liberty and the consciousness of having the right of being in the world, as do

the American women. Their spirit of freedom is not dimmed by the obsequious and servile attitude toward queens in monarchial countries. Each woman in this country feels to be a queen in the true sense of the word, and that is what clothes her with the natural charm which no woman of any other country possesses. The bowing-down effects upon the minds of the women, and through them upon the people, by monarchial courts, the external pomp, the exclusiveness, casts a demoralizing influence upon those who are excluded from the man-created circles of arrogance and assumed superiority, and for this reason the women of this free country are expected to stand side by side with their husbands, brothers and sons in a movement which cannot attain the needed impulse without woman's co-operation. Nothing must be left undone to make them realize the importance of rousing themselves from the lethargy and indifference of ages.'

"As the lady took her seat a thunder of applause arose from the audience——"

Olga looked at the clock and seeing how late it was, and how much more they had to read, they decided to finish it the next evening, and so they retired. Earlier than ever before appeared Ernestine, and found Olga having everything ready, and immediately she began:

"——Thus far, wherever I go, I appear as an 'incognito,' but the Brotherhood of Destruction knows every step I take. Again I met the two members, and I could not refuse to attend one of their meetings. Having promised them to accept their invitation, they came at the appointed evening, and punctually we arrived at the hall, which was filled with a large gathering of men and women. I was led to the platform, and when the meeting was called to order I was introduced to the audience by the presiding officer and the greeting was very cordial, indeed.

"The first speaker of the evening was a lady. She advanced to the platform and with a resonant voice she addressed the president and members. She spoke slowly and with marked impressiveness. She said that for several years she had spent most of her time studying the questions that are daily appearing with increasing demand for recognition. The chilling indifference of the majority of women to everything that would so easily help to smooth the way for the radical change that cannot be avoided, had convinced

her that no kind, no sort of mild means would suffice to shake up and break the sleep of centuries. She had tried her best to be lenient with women, considering the great disadvantages that, as a sex, they had been surrounded with, but seeing no hope for the race unless that neglected force could be utilized, she had joined the Destructive Movement. Not the slightest doubt, after having carefully investigated the existing conditions, was left in her mind, that at the bottom of the tremendous problems was woman. If women could be made to understand the true state of affairs, their interest could be enlisted and methods of reconstruction instead of destruction could be adopted; if they could be taught the importance of newly discovered sciences, they would see at once that their own safety and happiness demands this great change.

"As you know, I try to penetrate into all stages of society to obtain the necessary information, and it requires less strategy to obtain it from the working classes than from the idle ones. As briefly as possible I will relate to you a sad case, that of a seamstress, a first class working woman, whose artistically finished garments, of the finest materials, reach only the homes of the wealthy. Does she receive an adequate remuneration for her labor? No, only a mere pittance! Think for a moment, that woman's ill paid work must provide life's necessities not only for herself and children, but for her sick husband! They live in a small house. I went to see her several times and found her sitting in a small room, and from where she sat working, her anxious eyes wandered every little while into the next room, where upon a bed lay what appeared to be a bundle of bones. It was the wasting form of the unfortunate husband, stricken down with cancer of the stomach. The sorrowful and anxious wife, every time she caught sight of the poor man, had to wipe the perspiration from her forehead and hands, which seemed to be the dew pressed out from an oppressed soul. Would such conditions exist if the 'high society ladies" would think of the conditions, surroundings and soul agonies of the over-worked and underpaid producers of not only the useful things, but the luxuries of life? Would they not change their senseless manner of living? Would their minds not perceive that the wrongs they inflict on the helpless will rebound back upon the oppressors? The next sad case is that of a woman whose husband, willing to work and in good health, could find none. Her ceaseless work had undermined her

health. The work she performs compels her to stand on her feet the whole day. Her feet and her hands swell, and very often her face, too. Her work is mingled with heavy sighs. Oh, if she could only have some rest! Think, my brothers and sisters, if the women of the wealthy class could understand that through the infallible law of the oneness of the human family, if the sighs, groans and agony of the oppressed could find their way in a subtle, unsuspected manner into the abodes of those who believe themselves by reason of their wealth and position free from the misery their selfishness creates, would they not agree with the modern ideas that the present social system must be destroyed?' There was great applause. 'To the shame of our countrywomen,' she continued, 'many of them show a more cringing and servile spirit toward foreign titled people than foreign women do. Here is an instance: An Italian aristocratic woman, who owed her dressmaker over one thousand francs, complained that English and American customers received more attention from her than she did, which made the dressmaker feel justified in speaking the truth plainly, saying: 'Countess, how do you suppose I would live without my foreign customers? I must have the American and English money in order to shoulder the Italian debts.' It is reported that the 'justice loving' American woman who was present, called it insolence, impertinence, and reproachfully said to the working woman, 'How dare you reply to that lady in that manner?' The aversion and contempt of honest and useful work is upheld by foreign aristocratic women and instilled into the minds of the children, and this is the class to whom our wealthy American women, whose ancestors honored labor, are bestowing their country's millions of dollars for the empty honor of titles. We are told that some of the foreign pauper aristocrats live by toadying to the wealthy and ambitious Americans, who remunerate them for the social favors procured by their acquaintance. It is to be deplored that the possession of great wealth has blinded our women to the great principles of simplicity, equality and honorable industry, which have lifted this country above the level of any country on earth. It is deplorable that American women are becoming guilty of reviving the boundless ambition and extravagance of the middle ages with the millions wrung from the industrious men and women, and worse yet, from the children, of their country! It is deplorable that women born in a country blessed

with freedom as no country ever was, wilfully trample under foot the greatest privilege, or natural right, I might say, granted to citizens—human freedom. It is deplorable that women who ought to be 'living monuments' to speed their country on to the greatest attainable progress and virtue, prefer to listen to the deadening exhortations of pride and decaying external greatness. It is deplorable that the evil example from the foreign aristocrats should be adopted by the women of our great, our beloved free country! I will conclude my remarks, thanking you for your patience, with the statement that if the world is to be reformed, women must be first reformed. Rapidly and surely this great country will decay, unless effective means are secured that will reach their hearts and they be made to understand the important position they hold in life.'

"The applause that followed was deafening. When order was restored the presiding officer arose, making very complimentary remarks to the lady speaker, and then, turning toward me, he said he knew the audience would consider it a great favor if I would be willing to deliver an address. My answer was, that I would have preferred to remain silent, but the calls were so loud and persistent that I could not help but rise and face the eager audience. My first remark was that I was very glad to witness their earnest desire for the betterment of the world's present condition, and above all I appreciated the great interest in this matter shown by the women. It is upon the demonstration of women's enthusiastic and sincere interest in reform work that its final result rests. It is a most wonderful sign of the time in which we live, their departure from the old and narrow sphere where they have been confined from time immemorial. It will demand man's keen sense of justice and wisdom not to thwart their aspirations. I agree with the views expressed by the lady. It is deplorable that American women should forget the duites they owe their country and to the memory of their forefathers' sacrifices to establish a free government. But, thank heaven, the number of these women is not large. It is true that their influence for evil is great, especially for the unthinking portion. It certainly is deplorable that American women lower themselves and their country, by not holding themselves above a class of suitors who are the cringing slaves and adherents to monarchial institutions which have been built on pillage, blood and the basest human passions. Those women wilfully place themselves in

the way of their country's progress; they close their ears to the earnest appeals of their country-women, who realize and freely express themselves that their highest aim is to uplift their fellow-beings and contribute toward an ideal order of human life. I firmly believe that men would grow weary of accumulating vast fortunes if women refused to become participators in the unholy exertions, and were to find the true happiness in a useful life, surrounded by the charms that appear in a life devoted to mutual helpfulness and willing usefulness. Freedom is the natural condition toward which every intelligent being aspires. To be free! How the word in itself expands the human soul! Free from bondage, free from ignorance, free from poverty, free from all evils and suffering.

"Oh, you fortunate ones, born in a free country! It is not easy for you to grasp the feeling of submission and servility imbibed with the mother's milk, and engrafted with almost every breath, inculcated into the minds of monarchial subjects, in the homes, schools and churches. It was reserved for our age to make the discovery, by what force and instrumentality the race could be kept in that condition, and let us hope that this important discovery will in due time combine and unite every reform movement so that the whole world will witness the great and glorious success of the 'New Era.'

"Having finished my remarks and taken my seat, a deep bass voice was heard coming from the middle of the hall, addressing the president. Looking in that direction, I noticed a tall, robust young man. At the invitation of the president he came forward to the platform. As he stood there he slowly glanced around, and with a voice that resounded from one end of the hall to the other, began:

"'Mr. president, ladies and gentlemen: I might have kept my seat among the audience, as I have not much to say, were it not that I like to look into the faces of my hearers, which never fails to give me inspiration. Our worthy guest has touched upon the most important points that preoccupy the minds of the members of our Brotherhood. It comes with redoubled force when heard from the lips of one who has seen, and knows from personal contact, the conditions existing in foreign countries. Revolutions, with all their horrors, have brought but very little amelioration to the masses of the people. Their aspirations for uprising have proven abortive, and the cause for so much waste of blood and life, and the contin-

uation of the wrong social order, has been that the right blow never was struck at the root of the evil. The bandage that blind-folded the credulous people has never been torn sufficiently from their eyes so they could perceive the light and become convinced of their power and their rights as human beings. They have been led to look at life through the dark mist of superstition, and to believe in privileged beings to whom they had to bow submissively. We believe that the time for a radical change is at hand. When each individual will understand and live up to the realization that each one is his own king and priest, the thinking power and capacity will no longer be crushed, and then life will be what everybody intuitively longs for, a life of love, peace, harmony and plenty! The Brotherhood of Destruction would gladly avoid the violent blows which are to destroy a system which is sustained only by toil and deprivation of the great masses of humanity, but it would be wasted time to indulge in remedies that have proven worse than useless in the past, and at this stage it would simply be criminal. The Brotherhood of Reconstruction intends to use methods which would be excellent if oppressors and oppressed had not become hardened, the one rushing on in his evil ways, the other overwhelmed and unable to see a way of escape, and succumbs as an easy prey, therefore nothing but the most heroic measures will shake them sufficiently so that they will become conscious of the dreadful conditions which must be held before their vision in a glaring light so their mind cannot forget nor resist the impressions, and their understanding will clear the ideas of the pressing demands of the twentieth century.' A great applause arose from the audience as the speaker returned to his seat. All of a sudden the words of the poem, "Struggle for the Right," appeared before my mind. I approached the president and asked permission to recite it before the assmbly. He readily consented, and I begged them to listen to a poem which seemed to me adapted for the occasion. It had been published some years ago in one of the reform papers and it had impressed my mind so deeply that not a word had left my memory:

"We want no flag, no flaunting rag,
For liberty to fight;
We want no blaze of murderous guns
To struggle for the right.

Our spears and swords are printed words,
The mind our battle plane;
We've won such victories before,
And so we shall again.

"We love no triumph sprung of force,
They stain the brightest cause;
'Tis not in blood that liberty
Inscribes her civic laws.
She writes them on the people's hearts,
In language clear and plain;
True thoughts have moved the world before,
And so they shall again.

"We yield to none in earnest love
Of freedom's cause sublime;
We join the cry of 'Fraternity,'
We heed the march of time.
And yet we grasp not spike or spear,
Our victories to obtain;
We've won without their aid before,
And so we shall again.

"We want no aid of barricade
To show a front to wrong;
We have a citadel in Truth,
More durable and strong.
Calm words, great thoughts, unflinching faith,
Have never striven in vain;
They've won our battles many a time,
And so they will again.

"Peace, progress, knowledge, brotherhood,
The ignorant may sneer,
The bad deny, but we rely,
To see their triumph near.
No widow's tears shall load our cause,

No blood of brethren slain;
We've won without such aid before,
And we shall win again!

"I quietly retired to my seat, and a solemn silence lasted a few minutes, when a very aged and feeble looking man arose. He appeared excited and eager to speak, and calling the president, he began to move toward the platform, assisted by a young man. When he finally reached the place he straightened himself, and, turning toward me with a searching look and a gesture of impatience, he said: 'Ah, my dear sir! You are a young and trusting man; men of my age, who have given your remedies a trial and have become convinced of their uselessness, cannot help but feel a dreadful pain at the thought that your movement has chosen the wrong road, for again, through short-sightedness, the life-long sacrifices of thousands of our fellow beings will be wasted, ah, worse than wasted!' Here he wrung his hands and shook his white head. 'Men and women! Members of the Brotherhood of Destruction, for your own good, and that of the whole world, do not turn from the path you have followed thus far! The existing wrongs cannot be removed by anything milder than the measures adopted by this far-sighted Brotherhood. We must tear down the old structure before a new one can be constructed.' A loud applause followed. 'My career,' he continued, 'will soon be closed, but I beg you, brothers and sisters, strike the blows, strike them heavy and without mercy, and then—victory, complete victory, will be the reward of your great work!'

"Everyone in the hall arose to their feet and the applause was deafening. The speaker stood straight and looked as if he had gained much strength. Raising both hands, he made a sign as if asking the assembly to take their seats. When order was restored, he began: 'We all understand that the perpetual want of every human being is food, clothing and shelter, and the earth is the great storehouse of everything that is needed for all those natural wants, and who deprives the large masses of human beings of them?'

"'The capitalists!' cried aloud the audience.

"'Yes! and how often do we hear our short-sighted people condemn 'only' the crushing landlordism of Europe? Now, please, those of you who have not read this plain article, please listen: 'Who causes war? The capitalists. Who adulterates food? The

capitalists. Who import scab labor? The capitalists. Who employes child labor? The capitalists. Who bribes the state legislatures? The capitalists. Who despises the best class of people—the working people? The capitalists. Who promotes swindling schemes? The capitalists. Who has no respect for the public? The capitalists. Who bribes the press to deceive the public? The capitalists. Who is trying to reduce labor to the level of a machine?' 'The capitalists!' everyone exclaimed. 'I might continue,' said the speaker, 'but do we not all understand the reason why this whole country is standing over a volcano. Can anything else result from the bitter, ever-increasing war between capital and labor?'

"'Nothing—nothing else!' shouted everyone, and with a firm step the speaker returned to his seat.

"When quiet was restored, I again arose, and with a strong conviction, I said that the hearty demonstrations I had witnessed against the existing evils were like a prophecy to me, that in due time the Reconstructive forces would attract all others into the line that would lead to the world's salvation, and so ended the night's meeting. My dear sister, this is a long letter, but I know you like to hear the news and you may receive another in a few days, as I will carry a plan to its finale, and that is of placing a young man in a position where he will be of great help to our cause. My best regards to Miss Palmey. Your affectionate brother, Ivanohe."

"My good brother is right," said Olga. "I like to hear the news, don't you?"

"Indeed I do," heartily answered Ernestine, and they retired for the night.

CHAPTER XIV.

Every day Olga was anxiously waiting for the letter promised by her brother, and in due time it arrived. "Come to see me this evening," she told her friend, as she saw her in the afternoon, and as early as they could they were again together, and Olga began to read:

"In looking around wherever I go, dear sister, I discover such a great waste of mind forces, especially among the industrial classes, that I feel as if our movement ought to be pushed forward at a greater speed, but the second thought suggests that the ground must first be prepared before the seed can be sown. This case refers to a chief cook. One day, while resting in front of the hotel, a fine carriage passed, drawn by two handsome horses. Two waiters were placing more chairs in front of the building, when I heard one of them remark: 'That gentleman is the owner of the Hotel H—, one of the most fashionable in the city. He has some trouble because his chief cook has taken sick and thus far he can find no one to take charge of that important position.

"'To be chief cook in such a hotel,' replied the other, 'must bring a good salary.'

"'Yes, once upon a time they were well paid, but now, you know how wages have been lowered.'

"They entered the building and I began to meditate upon what I had heard. My mind was immediately made up. You may disapprove it, or feel amused at what I did. Next day, under pretext of seeking employment in the hotel, and in order to take in the whole situation, I wore clothes that would indicate that I was in need of work, and went to the proprietor. When he saw me, he asked coldly what I wanted. I told him I was trying to find something to do. He turned half away, and then brusquely asked: 'What can you do; can you clean the yard and do that kind of work?' 'Yes, sir,' I replied.

"He rang a bell and pretty soon a man appeared and humbly enquired what was the master's order. 'I have noticed,' said the

master, 'that the yard is not kept as neat and clean as I like to see it. Take charge of this man, and see that the work be done, and no time wasted.' 'Very well, sir,' the man replied, and beckoning to me, he led me away through a large corridor, which opened into a smaller one, and from there we stepped into a room which was full of all sorts of odors. A door was opened and I caught a glimpse of the kitchen. It was a large room, arranged with every modern appliance saving and convenient to the owner, but very trying for the performers of the kitchen work. In a short time I discovered everything I was looking for—the condition of the working people. All the machinery of the basement was under the kitchen floor, and ran mostly by crude oil. The steam and heat and the strong smell of the gases, the heat underneath, that kept the kitchen floor hot, it was no wonder that not only the chief cook, but several others, were taken sick. I took every advantage to gain information, and while examining minutely everything and every line of work performed by the overheated and overworked men, the thoughts crossed my mind, oh, how different would every human being act if they understood the true, the sublime mission of life, the mission to love and help one another, instead of competing against and oppressing one another! When we think of the obstacles that the wrong system interposes at the heart and genius of human beings, another thought arises: How can the system be changed if we don't change the wrong forms of existing governments? I heard recently in this country what was nothing new in the old continent to hear—that one of the crowned heads owns personally forty-three castles, thirty-two towns, with annexed campaign; twenty buildings in one city, twelve in another, and eight in still another; thirty-two breweries, thirty-four mills, and sixteen furnaces, the value of which is estimated to amount to six hundred sixty million dollars, and at the same time is mentioned the dreadful state of the millions of subjects, who must constantly struggle and can never obtain what is necessary to maintain, as it ought to, the precious human life. Has any kind or form of government thus far ever used its powers for the good of the dear people? Surely not, and this is the twentieth century great problem. The whole people must be aroused, the whole people must be informed and educated so they will understand, and become useful instruments for the reconstruction of a new and perfect system."

"Then," exclaimed Olga, "the enlightened people will surely no

more build and maintain governments that are unfit to appear before our advanced age!"

"But think of the enormous amount of intellectual work that will be needed to reach all the people," thoughtfully said Ernestine.

"My good friend," said Olga, "remember what one of our members so truly has expressed, 'that the hypocrisies and shams of life, which veneer us with that which we are not, and prevent us from being that which we are,' will torment us no longer, an dyou see all forms of slavery will disappear. I must stop and go on with the reading."

"Yes, please go on, for it is very interesting."

"Having obtained all the information I needed, I sent a notice to the proprietor that I had finished the work and could not remain any longer. The matter being settled, I went to visit the chief cook. I found him hardly able to stand on his feet. He was a young man with a finely shaped head. I was very favorably impressed by his appearance, and introduced myself as a member of a movement which was trying to bring about a change for bettering the conditions of the working people. A weary smile appeared on his pale face.

"'Do you belong to that kind of people,' he said, 'who are pointed at as cranks and utopians?'

"'I presume those are the names given by the persons who have never given a thought to the possibility to obtain that desirable and good change. We are recruiting individuals in every land whose natural gifts mark them out as useful instruments to carry on the immense plan of reconstruction. I have heard that you had started out in life as a sculptor, and are now struggling in a position to which you are not adapted. Our recruiting agents have made a close study of human nature, and nothing escapes their sharp perceptions. Allow me to ask you, are you satisfied with your present condition?'

"'Decidedly not!' he answered, with a strong motion of his head. 'At the time I learned this trade cooks were well paid, but now we must take what we are offered or go tramping, as the labor market is overrun with idle hands. It is true, I had started out as a sculptor; I was passionately in love with that inspiring task. My teachers were untiring in their praises and had prophesied a great success, but everyone's anticipations were cut short. My father was suddenly taken sick, and after a protracted illness he was taken

from us, and we were left in a very poor condition. I could no longer pursue my studies, and in order to help keep the wolf from the door I had to take hold of anything in order to earn something. Finding no permanent occupation, I decided to learn the cooking business. It was a very hard task to give up what inspired every thought with ideal conceptions, and it was a painful experience to enter into an occupation so foreign to my inclinations, but what could I do? I had not the heart to leave in want the dear ones who depended upon me, so I became resigned to my fate. Not a day passes but the ugly contrast is before my eyes. The contrast between monuments, statues and all other artistic productions, and the piles of dead flesh which I must cut and trim for hours every day, and besides that, the working place is not fit to be used. It destroys the health of even strong persons. The hot kitchen floor, the deafening roar of the large stoves, caused by using the crude oil, the steam and heat, and the strong smell of gases—but what can we do?'

"'It is a hopeful sign of the times,' I said, 'when the working people begin to take notice of their surroundings. It points out the fact that the inner being is awakening; they become aware of the poisonous doses administered to them—overwork, submission, deprivations; it is the best sign of the times when the producers of every human comfort begin to become conscious that they are worthy human beings. Among the members of the Reconstructive Movement, there are a number of wealthy men and women whose views have become so clear in regard to the duties they owe to their fellow beings that they have overcome all worldly claims, and they know that wealth and fame have no significance before the eyes of our impartial Father. Therefore, they have consecrated their earthly possessions to carry to a successful end this noble, humane movement. They have founded, and support, the institutions which are intended for the development to the highest perfection of every latent talent that is discovered in men and women. We do not compel anyone to attend those places of learning, but so far everyone has accepted it with great enthusiasm, and each one being free to follow the vocation for which they are best fitted, they make the most remarkable progress. Those good members are the sincerest friends of the despised class of people. They will not neglect to have the outward things to correspond with the good which is innate in mankind. The

homes they want to see filled with pure joy, to typify them as the heavenly homes. The outward surroundings shall be lovely and uplifting, to demonstrate the aspiring sentiments of the human family.'

"'My dear sir,' said the young man, 'your words produce in me a peculiar effect; they reach deep down into my heart. I have never heard expressions of that kind before; they produce a glimpse into a future too bright to contemplate. It is all so new and so strange.'

"'It may apepar so to those who have not had a chance to discover their latent possibilities. I will leave some of these pamphlets, which are very instructive, and if you are willing to enter into some of those institutions, you will please notify me, and then everything will be adjusted so you will find yourself again following your natural calling.'

"'Accept my most sincere thanks,' he said, and so we parted, and I feel certain that my errand has not been in vain, and that our brotherhood will gain another active supporter. Adieu, my dear sister, and please remember me to your good friend. I."

"Your brother," said Ernestine, "deserves the respect and love of every individual; he does not tire to inform, and thereby keep alive the burning spirit of reform. By the flashes of light that must unavoidably pierce through the consciousness of every being when their sense of right is strongly appealed to, they must certainly feel the compelling force to do their duty, and the consequence will be that the startling changes will undermine and destroy the monstrous system based upon and supported by the lowest propensities."

"Yes, you are right," said Olga, "and I should not doubt that we will get letters from him every day, for it seems that he intends to keep us informed of everything he does and sees in that new country. And now, let us retire," and so they did.

Two days later Olga was not surprised to receive another letter, and it goes without saying that the two friends met again at their usual place of reading.

"From the size of this letter," said Olga, "we must come to the conclusion that my brother intends to make a record of what is going on in the field of reform. I will begin: 'Dearly Beloved Sister: One thing I very much regret is, that you and Miss Palmey could not be present at the first meeting I have attended in this country held by the members of the Reconstructive Movement. I am very sorry that I can give you only the most salient points. It was a

remarkable meeting. At the appointed hour I entered the hall. The members were arriving and greeting each other very cordially. I noticed the tasteful decorations and the artistically executed emblems. The appearance of both men and women was respectable. The women were attired very tastefully, but there was nothing showy or frivolous about them. Taste and comfort were the two prominent features in their personal appearance. The presiding officer was a lady. She invited me to take a seat on the platform, and as she introduced me, said it was with grateful hearts that they extended the most cordial welcome to the head member of the Brotherhood. 'Welcome, brother, welcome!' was expressed with touching warmth by everyone present, and with the same warmth of feeling I returned the sincere greetings. The meeting was opened with a duet, sung by a young lady and a young gentleman. It was a thrilling song—a modern patriotic song. Next in order was a speech by a very eloquent speaker, a middle-aged gentleman. His speech was excellent, but as I want to send you a lady's speech, which I know will interest you and your friend very much, and it is pretty long, I have only written down what he said was the most interesting portion of his address. This he quoted from an article published by A. W. R. It began:

"'Were half the power that fills the world with terror,—
Were half the wealth bestowed on camps and courts
Given to redeem the human mind from error,
There were no need of arsenals and forts.'

"Of course, as I told you before, I can give you only the most salient points. He began: 'The writer said: 'I think the time is ripe for the popularizing of the New Thought. The critical analysis of economic history and scientific investigation have upset many of the cherished tenets of the church. There is no use for Christians to hide their heads in the sand, like the ostrich, and declare that everything will go on as usual. A rational belief in things of the soul must take the place of dogma. Superstition must give way to truth. On the other hand, there is real danger of so tincturing our evolutionary ideas with materialism as to make them so repulsive to many who would break away from the despotism of the church, that they will be driven back to that which is unsatisfying, but which is always

reluctantly given up. To this latter class, particularly, belong the women. The feminine mind is always intuitive, and clings to spiritual things, even when reason rebels. I can clearly see that the Reconstructive Movement will become a motor power that will move the world with the swiftness of the cyclone when woman wakes up to a positive assertion of her rights and privileges. For her my heart ever pulsates, for always has she been in servitude to the tyranny of man. He has ever courted and petted her, and in this very act he has proclaimed his dominion over her. In the lower walks of life he has prostituted her to his passion; in the higher he has purchased her for money. He has made the marriage relation a means of petty tyranny, and in the workshop the capitalist has used her as a pad to repel the demands of male labor. The church has been willing to take her silent devotion, but her expanding genius has been met with the sullen mandate of the scriptures: 'Let the women keep silence in the church.' 'If she would learn, let her ask her husband.' But in these years of revolutionary thought she is daring to express herself. She has essayed to think, and when once aroused to thought, it is with an intensity of which man is not capable, and who can measure the force of thought? She thinks, but she will not think the thoughts of the materialist, for her intuition tells her that she is immortal. In these later days, when the poet's dream of life seems not so difficult of realization, the New Thought, so-called, has burst, full-blossomed, to our vision. The Reconstruction of the New Thought will charm the feminine mind, and offer to woman a field for her activity in which she will become such a power that the race will be rejuvenated. It will turn her eyes from the altar to her own inward divinity. On this she will build her liberty, and motherhood will express strength instead of weakness.'

"My dear sister, I wish I could write down the whole speech, for it was very instructive, but the time is too short. The following is by the lady I have mentioned before. She was escorted to the platform. She appeared about middle-aged, but was strong and well preserved.

" 'Brothers and Sisters,' she began, 'can anyone truthfully admit that human existence is what our Creator intended it should be? Has not life always been considered a mystery, and has not humanity been taught that all the woes of life were inevitable, and nothing but the process of destruction or death could deliver it from them? We

are now living in an age when those dark mysteries are disappearing. Many individuals have had glimpses of what will some day become established facts. Happiness has been sought on a plan of existence which could result only in discord. Why? Because genuine happiness was not understood. Worldly happiness has never assisted mankind to eradicate and disintegrate the destroying elements. On the contrary it has fed them, and, therefore, selfishness, greed, pride, envy and jealousy—those destroying elements—have prevented mankind from fulfilling its supreme mission, the perfect reconstruction of society. To succeed in carrying on those great errors, one-half of the race had to be ignored, and thereby it became the hidden factor of evil. We are warned again and again against the corrupting influences of great wealth, but in the prominent papers of the country not a word of disapproval is to be found against the unheard-of extravagance practiced by women. On the contrary, they compliment them. We read of one heiress who never did any useful work, who had a wedding robe ornamented with twenty thousand dollars worth of lace! Think, twenty thousand dollars worth of lace on one dress! Is it any wonder that men steal God's wide acres in order to fill their purses and furnish the means to satisfy woman's pride? Everywhere in this country—think, my friends, in this country, where people were once plain and industrious—how the enervating influences of luxuries are increasing! Who are the leaders in these destroying paths? Unfortunately they are the women! The fact is much commented upon that greediness for wealth has become a controlling passion; that there is no record in the history of the world where individuals have succeeded in amassing such colossal fortunes. If the wives and daughters of the many millionaires would let their conscience and the highest sentiments of their hearts rule their daily lives, would they not become conscious that their duty is to check their husbands' and fathers' greed by refusing to use the money extorted from the great masses reduced to a wage slavery? Would they not become the saviors by helping to establish a system that the twentieth century demands? If the minds of the women are not replete with elevated thoughts, woe to the world! Listen to this extract from a reliable paper: 'Treatment for the drinking habit among the '400' is now almost as common among physicians as treatment for coughs and colds. It is the life that society women lead that causes it. They have no time to eat or sleep, and consequently,

they must turn to what will give them strength to go through their social functions—intoxicating liquor. It takes the place of food and is already digested. Then, when their vitality is burned out, they drink more and more, until they are its slaves and are wrecked. Society women drink to live!' Luxury is demoralizing to a frightful degree; it is diverting true, womanly, noble nature in this free land, as it has among the exclusive classes in Europe. Their souls are despoiled of every sentiment of love and meekness. Their select circle is alive with pride to outshine one another, not in useful and good lives, but in frivolities and idleness. If the evil influences emanating from the so-called high classes could be restricted within their circle, the gain would be great, but their starved souls can find no rest unless their extravagant doings are published and advertised, and jealousy and envy are aroused in the hearts of those not considered their equals! The dreadful marks of an unlimited and unchecked greed for money and self-aggrandizement are transmitted and stamped upon the innocent infants in this, our country, which was once the model of unaffected simplicity. Why should our women poison the hearts of their offspring, inculcating in them the spirit of presumption and haughtiness and every other evil tendency? Would our forefathers, who abhorred and fled from the continent where such ostentatious behaviors were practiced, give their approval to doings so out of harmony, so opposed to the great principles of a government intended to be a government 'of the people, by the people and for the people?' Here is a morsel thrown out to feed the public mind by the public press. Tell me, if the subtle, powerful substances which build up human character are not disturbed or destroyed in contemplating news of this kind? Listen: 'A six-months-old baby, the granddaughter of a bonanza king, has six servants to attend to her daily wants. These are two trained nurses, a matron of the nursery, a French maid, a special laundress, and a coachman. Her Alderney cow is cared for by two men having no other duties to perform. The child has a thousand dollar point lace coat, and one of her jewels is worth fifteen thousand dollars. If no other babies come in her way, she will inherit a fortune of fifty million dollars.' My good friends, you know that there are thousands of poor babies who are starving because their mothers have not enough nourishment in their emaciated bodies to give them life! Still another child of a railway magnate, the press informs us, has forty new dresses, and her

menagerie of animals is removed to the summer resort to amuse her during the summer. The grandfathers of these pampered pets secured privileges and acquired wealth that justly belonged to the people, and that is the cause why thousands of babies are hungry. Now, my friends, think for a moment: Fourteen persons engaged to wait upon a six-months-old baby! The Great Teacher, who understood the true meaning of life, was not surrounded by so much servile attendance, and he grew and matured into the glorious redeemer of the world! Is it not a weakness, or rather, is it not criminal, to tolerate conditions so antagonistic to the common good? Fourteen persons taken from a line of occupation that would produce ease and comfort by utilizing their natural capacities in useful endeavors. Think, those fourteen persons need food, clothing, etc. By whom are they produced? And can they return a just equivalent for the energies spent for their support by the real toilers? Then consider the immoral effects upon the minds of the helpless children—the two extremes, the starving ones and the over-indulged ones. If the natural wants of the poor are ignored, and they are deprived of opportunity to obtain full development, the other extreme reaches the same baleful results, for they grow in the delusive pleasure grounds of the low senses. Here is another case: 'A baby, aged four months, worth $10,000,000 now, and scheduled to have $30,000,000 when he reaches his majority. He is the baby that is to be named with great ceremony. The christening ceremony will be performed by Rev. W. N. V., Bishop Coadjutor of the Protestant Episcopal diocese of R. I., assisted by Rev. E. W. P., Rector of the church. This church received $45,000 from the father and uncle of the boy.' There is a great deal of ridiculous fuss made by the press dispatch, and commented upon by a reform paper, which says: 'Our neighbor has a baby four months old, prettier, brighter, sweeter, and yet no mitred bishop of the holy church has poured consecrated water on his little bald head. All that fantastic show before high heaven is not made on account of the baby, but for the sake of the $10,000,000. The bishop baptized the money instead of the baby. The crowd came out to see the heir of millions instead of the heir of immortality. The preachers prostrated themselves before a golden baby, instead of humbly worshipping the father of the whole human family. The abominable, exclusive, aristocratic spirit, which has in all the epochs of the world divided the human family and violated the most sacred

command of 'Love God above all things, and thy neighbor as thyself,' appears in this free land in the form of capitalism. It is as dangerous to the comfort and happiness of the human race as was the feudal system. It appropriates and controls the productions of human skill and ingenuity for its own selfish ends!' Listen again: 'A starving mother sells her baby for one hundred dollars. The life of a baby was put up for barter. It was not an auction sale, but the starving mother gave to the public a chance to bid for the life of her child. The sale was made and one hundred dollars was paid for a human being. The bill of sale was made out, it was witnessed by a lawyer and two others, and the seal of a notary public was attached. The matter was submitted to the registering officer, who said: 'The sale of human life is a violation of the constitution. I suppose this document, however, will have to be accepted for filing.' The father was out of work and the family almost starving. In her despair the mother decided to sell her child. She was nearly heartbroken, but destitution and want hardens even the softest hearts!'

"'It is horrible!' exclaimed everyone in the audience. 'Following,' continued the speaker, 'are some comments from a reform paper: 'No more horrible or monstrous fact could be told that would disclose the heartlessness and vileness of the present system under which we are living. Even the uncivilized systems under which savages used to live, never led to such horrible outcomes! It is plain enough that the system under which we live is fiendish, and yet the short-sighted, idiotic people, shout 'Great is our civilization!' Has the world ever followed, and is the world following, the wise teachings which alone can bring real contentment and peace? Are those who claim the authority to lead the way living and practicing the life-giving principles so plainly given for the world's guidance, or are they empty words, fit only to fill the mouths of the pretending leaders to salvation? Is it true, or is it not, that 'All that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world, and the world passeth away, and the lust thereof?' The world seems to have forgotten the solemn words: 'Verily, I say unto you, that a rich man shall hardly enter into the kingdom of heaven.' And again: 'I say unto you, It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God!' The two extremes would surely not exist in society, and humanity would be given the chance to rise higher,

and the true Divine Image and Likeness of the Father would be reflected in every one of his childrn, if those living words were well understood. It would free this planet from every pretender who clogs the wheel of true progress, and from every supporter of institutions that strangle every upward aspiration on the part of humanity. Many are living who can perceive the crimes that are turned into spectacles to awe into servile submission the ill-trained masses of whole nations. Consider this history of a crime, written by Victor Hugo, in a squalid attic in Spitalfields:

THE QUEEN'S CORONATION ROBE.

"A weaver is plying his loom;
With work-worn hands the shuttle he wields,
But the woof and the warp through the gloom
Is gorgeous in purple, and crimson and gold;
With heaven's deep blue, and with sunset red
Like a rainbow-hued wave in a bright river rolled,
Quivers and glistens each silken thread.
But the weaver is poor, and his face, it is white,
And the weaver's attic is empty and bare;
What means all that golden-wrought vesture so bright,
'Mid the want and the hunger and sadness there!
The weaver is weaving the robe of a queen,
But he weaves in his blood and his tears in between.

Westminster Abbey's nave and aisles
Teem with a courtly crowd,
The queen, with her maids of honor, files
Through an ocean of heads, low bowed.
She walks, and with bright, irridescent sheen
Her robe glistens bright in each fold—
The gem-laden robe of a maiden queen
Tinctured with crimson and gold.
Bow, but draw back, as the pageant nears,
Draw back in horror and dread!
The crimson is blood, and the diamonds tears
By millions of toilers shed.
A rebel has woven the robe of his queen
But he wove in his blood and his tears in between.'

" 'One of the fathers of this, our great nation, a man brave and good, expressed some ideas that ought to be remembered. 'It is not,' he said, 'in a splendid form of government, nor in powerful, aristocratic establishments that the people will find happiness, or their liberties protection, but in a plain system, devoid of pomp, protecting all and granting favors to none.' There was great and hearty applause.

" 'Never before has woman's nature been understood as it is in this free country, because in no other country have women had the chance to rise from the depth of ignorance and superstition. In monarchial countries it was asked, what can a prince, a king, learn from a woman? The answer came: They can learn what King S. Louis learned from Blanca; Louis XII from Maria of Cleves, and Enrico from Giovanna d' Albret. Out of sixty-nine kings who bore the crown of France, only those three loved their people, and they were trained by their mothers. Many persons think that the high political ideas require wiser interpreters than women. But what can an instructor do more than try his very best to form a virtuous heart in an honest man and a good citizen? The celebrated Sheridan was struck with the imperfect education that was imparted to English women, and saw the irresistable influence they exercised over those who educated them so badly. He conceived the idea of a national school. 'Women rule us,' he said. 'Let us provide the means to make them perfect. The more knowledge they possess, the more enlightened we shall become. From the culture of woman's spirit man derives his wisdom. It is through woman that nature writes upon man's heart.' The idea was great, and had it been carried out no one can tell the power for good it would have exercised over old England. The idea contained a moral and political evolution, the regeneration of the government, true civilization in India, humanity for Ireland, and morality by the side of industry, for women educated in the right sense would stamp on man's soul true evangelical charity and willingness to make any sacrifice for the welfare and uplifting of humanity. 'The future of a child,' said Napoleon, ' is always the work of the mother, either good or bad.' Was Louis XIII not as weak as his mother, always rebellious and next submissive? Can you not recognize in Louis XIV the passions of a Spanish mother, a woman romantic and sensual, vain and bigoted? The mother of the two Corneilles possessed a great and elevated spirit, similar to the mother

of the two Gracchi, who gave to Rome the two great magistrates. Turn your gaze toward that square yonder, we are asked. In the midst of that great multitude you will see a young man with a high, intellectual forehead. Soon the guillotine will accomplish its work. He is writing his last thoughts. It is Barnave, one of the greatest orators of the constituent assembly, the rival of Mirabeau. In that supreme moment he is thinking of his mother, and thanks her for the courage that animates him. Another son of the people, the renowned Kant, loved to say that he owed everything to the care of his mother. Even in his old age he would exclaim: 'Never shall I forget my mother; it was she who developed the germ of goodness that was in my heart!' The illustrious Cuvier received from his mother the first lessons that developed his genius. The great man attributed to his mother the happiness in his studies and the glories of his discoveries. Many volumes could be written to prove the power and influence mothers can exercise over their children, either for good or for evil. How important, therefore, if women are to shape the morals of the family and country, that they join and co-operate with this sublime Reconstructive Movement! Here are some extracts from that apostle of universal freedom, who so strongly inculcated the equality of the sexes in regard to all civil and political rights, and who was largely indebted to his mother for the grand impulses which led him to consecrate his life to the service of humanity; that unselfish apostle of truth and justice, Joseph Mazzini! This plea for women can certainly not be surpassed in its deep sense of right and justice. He said: 'Love and respect woman. Seek in her not merely a comfort, but a force, an inspiration, the redoubling of your intellectual and moral faculties. Cancel from your mind every idea of superiority over her. You have none whatever. Long prejudice, an inferior education, and a perennial inequality and injustice, have created that seeming intellectual inferiority which has been turned into an argument of continual oppression. Does not the history of every oppression teach us how the oppressor always seeks his justification and support by appealing to the facts of his own creation? For half a century the supporters of the reigning families of Italy have declared the Italians unfit for freedom, while by their laws, and the brute force of hireling armies, they closed every path through which they might have overcome all the obstacles that

prevented their advancemnt, as if tyranny could ever be the means of educating men for liberty! Now, we men have always been, and still are, guilty of a similar crime toward women; there is none heavier in the sight of God. In the sight of God, the Father, there is neither man nor woman, there is only the human being. Like two distinct branches springing from the same trunk, man and woman are varieties springing from the common basis—humanity. There is no inequality between them, but—even as is often the case among men—diversity of special vocations or tendencies. Are two notes of a musical chord unequal or of a different nature? Man and woman are the two notes without which the human chord is impossible. They fulfill different functions, but they are equally sacred, equally manifestations of that thought of God which he has made the soul of the universe. Consider woman, therefore, as the partner and companion, not only of your joys and sorrows, but of your thoughts, your aspirations, your studies and your endeavors after social amelioration. Consider her your equal in your civil and political life. Be ye the two human wings that lift the soul toward the Ideal we are destined to attain. To the pioneer women of this country we owe nearly all that has been attained so far, but the mistake which has been made is, that the question has been too much one-sided and has therefore been despoiled of its sweeping power. It seems they have forgotten the words of the poet, that—

'Woman's cause is man's; they rise or sink
Together, dwarfed or God-like, bound or free.
And so these twain upon the skirts of time
Sit side by side, full summed in all their powers—
Self-reverent each, and reverencing each—
Distinct in individualities
But like each other as are those who love.
Then comes the statelier Eden back to man;
Then reign the world's great bridals, chaste and calm;
Then springs the crowning race of human kind!'

"'It is clear as daylight that if the women who have worked so long and so faithfully for the emancipation of their sex, had broadened the question intended for the emancipation of the whole

race, the blazing light of right and justice would have penetrated the recesses of the people's souls. Then the self-evident truth, 'That all men are created equal,' would not have permitted the creation of millionaires and paupers. The self-evident truth that all are endowed by the Creator with certain inalienable rights, would have led the people of this country to establish an industrial system that would not have robbed the many in order to enrich the few. Life, then, would be what the Creator intended it should be, free from want and sorrow. We hear that there are 4,000,000 women wage earners in this country, and statistics show the alarming fact that thousands of women are fighting the wolves from their doors! Can love, order, and all other good qualities find a firm footing upon such lamentable conditions? Can the principal factors in the home devote themselves to the betterment of the family, their lives being filled with anxiety and worry? If women become weak in mind and body, what hope is there for posterity? It is considered a great advantage for women that the industrial field is open to them, and we say, yes, under the right kind of system—the co-operative system—when the hours of labor shall be reduced, and each one—men as well as women—will fill the places for which they are naturally fitted, and their aim will not be to out-do one another for mercenary purposes, but to be mutually helpful, the advantage then will certainly be great. But every true reformer knows that women entering the industrial field now and competing with men, using all manner of schemes, fills with apprehension every lover of human progress. If Divine Love guides our life, every particle of selfishness will be stamped out of our hearts, and the cries and moans pressed out from the unfortunate victims of usury and monopoly, will be turned into joyful praises to the ever-present Good! Beggary, filth and diseases will become only shadowy reminiscences of a dark past. In America, our beloved land, the people can see their way clearer than in any other country, because it is, or it 'must' be, governed by the consent of the people ,and not by brute force; a nation free from the crushing weight of standing armies and navies. But who is there that cannot see the wrong tendencies of the times? Oh, let us remember what our martyred president, Abraham Lincoln, said: 'What constitutes the bulwark of our liberty and independence? It is not our frowning battlements or bristling sea

coasts, our army or our navy. Our reliance is in the love of liberty which God has planted in us. Our defence is in the spirit which prizes liberty as the heritage of all men in all lands everywhere. Destroy this spirit and you have planted the seed of despotism at your own doors. Familiarize yourself with the chains of bondage, and you prepare your own limbs to wear them. Accustomed to trample on the rights of others, you have lost the strength of your own independence and become a fit subject of the first cunning tyrant who rises among you. They who deny freedom to others deserve it not for themselves, and under a just God cannot long retain it.' Thanks to the enlightenment which appears through the discovery of spiritual and mental science—for it certainly is the best remedy for the betterment of the human disposition and character—women are getting armed with that power of knowledge and are ready to work and co-operate with the progress-loving men in order to reconstruct the social structure. I am very sorry to say that a great sensation has been stirred up, resulting from the meeting of a state Congregational Association, comprising the orthodox clergy, representatives and senators of the general assembly, college scientists and scores of leading business men. They adopted the most astonishing appeal to the national and state governments ever made by an American Christian body. Their resolution included a demand that 'the whipping post be revived for petty crimes, and that imprisonment for life be the judgment for criminals who have been convicted of more than three offenses!' Those men are considered leading lights, but where would their cruel and inhuman suggestions lead this country? Those blind supporters of the present system—which, if not changed, will be the great promoter of crimes—tell me, my friends, if the measures suggested by them will not serve to intensify the existing evils?' There were great signs of approbation from the assembly. 'It does not seem possible that, when the causes which produce the evil effects can so plainly be discerned, those men could willfully ignore them, and are ready to pull the world back to the barbarous and demoralizing times! A modern writer describing the wickedness of women, advocates bodily punishment, something like the whipping-post I have mentioned. It is surprising to think that authors should treat important subjects so superficially. He referred mainly to women who married

for money or social position, and whose lives became, consequently, a disgrace to the entire sex. The author does not seem to know that, as a rule, the unfortunate girls in such cases ought to bear the least blame, for their young and inexperienced minds are dazzled by the fascinating pictures held before them by their ambitious parents, and often when mated to individuals old enough to be their fathers, and not having the least affinity of heart and soul, they seek to fill the emptiness of their lives with vices and hypocrisy? By the radical change of the present system demanded by the Brotherhood of Reconstruction, will the great truths of another writer be verified, that: 'Good, God-loving women—women who pray, women who hope, women who inspire men to do the best that is in them—they are the glory and safety of nations.' But let us add that women, no more than men, can bring that high transformation as long as they live under a system that compels their minds to be filled from morning till night with material, worldly and selfish thoughts. Oh! Why are the people so slow; why can they not understand that nothing but the Reconstructive Movement can compel the old things to pass away, and that then all things will become new, and how, through the rampant growth and vigor, new sets of emotions, and pure and holy motives will fill the world! In this noble Reconstructive work its adherents are strengthened by the clear fact that their work bears constant fruit, and can be brought forth as living testimonials. Let us rejoice, for again we have three converts who arose from the black magic ideas of deifying the world's property, and now deify the power of popular rights. They have withdrawn from the parasitical circles, and have caused a complete change, not only in their own line of life as a wealthy mother and two daughters, but it has affected for the better the business relations between the employer and employes. It is a repetition of other similar good cases, and we are all invited to visit the great factories to see the wonderful changes since the women have turned their hearts from frivolities to elevating and noble principles, whch is a great promise of the rapid growth of our Reconstructive Movement. When the women of that class shall refuse to make extravagant use of the money wrung from men, women and children, reduced to a condition of slavery through the vile passion of greed, a radical change must necessarily follow, and very few men will care to accumulate piles

of money, and then will they realize that all men are brothers, and equal before the ever-present Creator, who is no respector of persons, and, their minds being relieved from the selfish burdens and strengthened by the exemplary lives of their wives and daughters, the unity and solidarity of the human race will impress their souls, and willingly and enthusastically will they become co-workers in establishing the new and perfect system. We will now, with grateful hearts, take a look at the donations of precious jewels by these three converted ladies. I suppose we all know the use that this Brotherhood is to make of all these gifts. It has decided to use these precious gifts, and the other products of human skill, to feed the taste for beauty in the human soul. We all know by experience that the sight of things rare and beautiful kindles the heart with higher aspirations. The brilliant and marvelous products of nature appeal to the innermost artistic sense, especially when contemplated free from the shadows of selfishness. The parties in whose keeping are the articles of jewelry will please step forward.' A lady and a gentleman came forward, preceded by two young men, who carried a table, which they placed in front of the platform. The jewelry was displayed. It consisted of gold monogram lockets with initials, large pins ornamented with pearls and diamonds; pearl sleeve links; stick-pins ornamented with diamonds; brooches shaped like baskets of flowers, with diamonds and emeralds; rings with sapphires; heavy lorgnette chains with pearls and emeralds; diamond earrings; elegant bracelets, and a large number of other fine articles. It was a brilliant sight. In orderly file the members stepped forward and many expressions of admiration arose from the people. When my turn came I descended from the platform and followed the others. As you probably remember, dear sister, I have always been susceptible to the peculiar impressions of what is called the magnetic radiance of precious stones. I felt a delightful sensation as I stood in front of the table, and was much moved at the thought of the great good that exhibition of so much natural beauty would exert upon the minds of millions of people, who in their whole lives would, under the present system, not have a chance to feast their eyes upon such marvels of nature's production. A resolution of appreciation to the donors was endorsed by the audience, and that concluded the meeting.

"Before I left I was told by the president that the Brotherhood was in possession of a very large collection of very valuable jewelry, turned over by women, who, in the same manner as the three mentioned that evening, had become adherents and were among the most enthusiastic supporters of the cause. I have accepted the invitation by the president to visit the factories and become acquainted with the parties. This is a long letter, and the next will, perhaps, be longer, but it may be even more interesting. The president has sent a note to the three ladies, notifying them of the presence of the head member of the Brotherhood of Reconstruction, and I am informed that she has received assurances of a warm welcome, and we are expected there at noon. So, good bye. In a day or two you may receive another letter. Adieu."

CHAPTER XV.

As it was late the two young friends retired. The next day Olga met her friend and told her:

"Be sure and come to my room tomorrow evening, for I know we shall have another letter."

"So do I," said Ernestine, and at the appointed time she appeared.

"You see," said Olga.

"How kind is your brother," replied her friend.

And Olga began: "Dear Sister: We arrived punctually and were received with the greatest cordiality. The family lives in a beautiful location. The mansion is an imposing structure, and the interior is furnished with all the elegance and attractiveness that money can provide. A sumptuous dinner had been prepared. The family consists of father, mother, two daughters and one son, the latter about nine years old. During the meal the lady led the conversation, and the husband listened with a pleasant expression on his countenance. The main topic was the doings of the Brotherhood, its progress and outlook for the future. After listening attentively, the husband took the word and said: 'The good that has already come to me through the influence of the Reconstructive Movement must be greatly appreciated by every one who has, like myself, been surrounded for years by conditions which kept the mind in a constant turmoil. Not only the great activity and stir in business, but the home had become a hotbed for the cultivation, growth and blossoming of everything that brings discord, discontent and worry. The factors in the home, who are now the promoters of peace and happiness, were, before their hearts were gained over by your great principles, more like corroding poison—you will pardon my frankness,' he said, turning to his wife and daughters. 'They were never satisfied; they were tormented by the fear of being out-shined by others; their jealousy was in constant activity, and the more those qualities were gratified, the more aggressive their attitude and the more increased

the complaints and dissatisfaction, and it reached such a point that home, instead of being a place of rest, had become to me a place of dread. I was ready to sacrifice any amount of money, in fact, everything, for the sake of peace, for which my soul craved, but all my efforts were in vain. They always succeeded in flattering my pride and ambition to see them get ahead, but after the excitement subsided the reaction was bitter. Excuse me, dear ones, I ought not to recall the past, but thank Providence——' 'It is all right,' said the wife, 'we, or rather I, deserve to be reproached. I had allowed myself to be carried along by the madness of the world's frivolities, which, the more they are indulged in, the more they enslave us. Sometimes I look back at the many years spent so uselessly, but how grateful I am that our daughters have been rescued before their hearts became hardened in the ways upheld by the wrongly called 'high classes.' By coming in close contact with the masses that we thought it was our privilege to treat and look down upon with contempt, we became more and more convinced of the wrong position we had assumed. I am sorry that the plans for the betterment of the large number of employes are not completed, but we are providing for them every comfort and every possible means to make life what it ought to be. When we get through with our meal we will drive to the place and you will see for yourself.'

"'Thank you, Madame,' I said; 'my heart is filled with unspeakable joy. I see that our hopes will be realized. The whole world looks to America, the greatest republic in the world, and especiallly to the American women. Your form of government, although, of course, not perfect, has, by the efforts of the women, opened the way for them to come to the front and demand their rights as human beings. Their struggle has, no doubt, been very hard, but the saving principles of liberty they have inherited for many generations have made them fit champions to overcome the many obstacles thrown in their way. Their intellectual development, if rightly applied, will in a short time command for them respect in the political, religious and industrial world. The most important crusade needed at present is to hold these important facts before them in such strong light that they will be aroused to the needed degree of energy and enthusiasm.' When I paused the oldest daughter, with her sparkling, intelligent eyes, looked

to her father and asked permission to express her thoughts. 'The women of America,' she began, 'feel greatly honored for the confidence the less favored women of the world place upon their ability to help them, but very few can probably realize the deadening influence of European aristocracy, their manners and customs, especially upon our wealthy classes. The women of that class, instead of helping the conventional slaves of Europe to break their chains, fall right in with them and become so imbued with their wrong ways and doings, that they despise and feel ashamed of their great, free country! This class of women ought to realize more than others their duty to help the advancement of the human family, but unfortunately, thus far it is the opposite. It is a wonder to me how our dear mother could withstand the condemnatory protests of the worshippers of the exclusive circles, and the poisonous arrows that were shot at her from all sides, for the simple reason that she decided to consecrate her life to a standard in keeping with the sublime teachings of true Christianity, contained in the principles of the Reconstructive Movement.' 'My dear child,' said the mother, 'the whole credit is not due to my weak efforts. Your own and your sister's willing and cheerful assistance have steadied my purposes.' 'My dear mother and sister,' said the youngest daughter, 'I do firmly believe that the whole credit is due to Divine Providence. Had it not been that we were led by It to investigate those principles, we could not have remained true to the solemn obligation we have taken upon ourselves.' 'Amen! my child,' said the father, with hearty approval. 'Never, I feel positive,' she continued, 'never could we have undergone and maintained that remarkable change had it not been for that living force which became the guiding light in our new career. We once were faithful contributors to and upholders of fashionable churches, but what was the main incentive for supporting those magnificent structures? It was the most favorable occasion to feed our vanity. Our hearts would run over with the deceptive pleasure of being the ones unsurpassed in elegance of apparel and latest fashionable dictates. The appearance of a plainly dressed worshipper in the midst of so much worldly finery was an eye-sore, and the offender would soon be made to feel out of place. Did the bland and unctious exhortations of our high-salaried preachers reach our perverted souls, and had they the power to recall them from con-

tinuing on the wrong path? How could they, when their own souls were steeped as deep as their congregation in the errors of worldly approbation?' 'Here you have it in a nutshell,' added the father. 'If the churches had fulfilled the duties they assumed, and been true examples, would the people have allowed their ambition to strangle human sympathy and would they have concentrated their whole efforts to accumulate worldly possessions? Never until our inner sight was opened by the correct interpretation and the discovery of the higher laws which govern our being, could we have stepped out of the wrong into the right path, and to it we owe the strength that led us into the ranks of the Reconstructive Movement, perceiving the dangerous tendencies toward which our country is leaning. The history of Europe ought to be known by the American people, and ought to be a lesson of warning. Instead of craving for empty titles and for the approbation and flattery of monarchial nations, we ought to stand firm, and with grateful hearts, upon the foundation erected by those who were ready to meet death rather than sacrifice liberty! It cannot be denied that corruption descends from the classes called 'above;' it descends, it cannot ascend, as we were told. This is an axiom that no one can reasonably contradict, and in order to make clear the process of the demoralization of the inferior classes, we must take the starting point from the so-called 'superior ones,' and this proves that as long as the human family is divided the world cannot improve. And the key to this mystery has been presented to me in the conversion of my wife and daughters from a life narrowed down to what a writer recently said: 'Bounded on the north by her servants, on the east by her children, on the south by her ailments and on the west by her clothes.' The change concerning my views and feelings in regard to my fellow beings astonishes me many times. There was a time when I cared no more, or, to tell the truth, cared less for those dependent on me for their living, than I did for the machines, but now their contentment and peace redoubles mine, and I discover in them many good qualities which the former cold indifference prevented me from perceiving, and I am not ashamed to own it before the world that for this healthful change I am indebted to my wife and daughters. Woman rules the home, and from that center flows either the good that uplifts, or the evil that pulls down the human race.' 'Let us all thank

Providence, for without that Divine help women nor men can rise to the higher realm of existence,' said his wife.

"By this time it was announced that everything was ready for the drive toward the location of the factories, and in a short time we were all ready for the start. We were enjoying the pleasant drive when the little boy cried: 'Here we are!' Turning a corner, I saw a large place covered with buildings.

"'The main building,' began the gentleman, to explain, 'is a glass factory, and there are some other factories. We will visit them all, as I know you are interested in everything that concerns the working classes.' 'Nothing interests me more,' I replied, 'than to see with my own eyes the doings of the industrial classes. It is to their energy and labor the world owes all its comforts.' At that moment we arrived at the main entrance, and soon found ourselves in the interior of the great building. It is entirely different from those I have seen in Europe, for every modern improvement has been adopted here. It was not the time when the glass blowers were busy, but all the other workers were attending to their diverse duties. It was an interesting sight. Everyone looked ful of vigor, and besides the respectful demeanor, one could feel the good will and cheerfulness that animated them all in every department we visited. Next I was taken to the further end of the place, to a building which was surrounded by a most beautifully cultivated ground. It was a fine structure. The entrance, orna mented with colonnades, led to a broad stone stairway, and as we reached the top the wide doors were thrown open and a beautiful hall, decorated most artistically, stood invitingly before us. We walked in, and from there we went to a very nice reading room, comfortably furnished and supplied with the best reform literature. Before entering another room the lady asked me to watch the sensation I would feel. I promised her I would, and we began to move in slowly. It was a good-sized room with a gothic, vaulted ceiling, handsomely painted. The windows were also of gothic style. The pictures and the ensemble impressed one with a sort of devotional feeling while on the threshold, but in moving into the interior a sense of harmony and an undefinable sweet vibration surrounded one's whole being. They seemed so pure and celestial that I could not help closing my eyes and exclaiming, 'Oh, how delightful!' The rest of the company were affected in the same

manner. 'How many persons have come for mental and physical relief to this sacred spot!' said the lady. 'This room is dedicated to the most exalted mind and spiritual culture, and not a single person who enters here leaves without being morally and physically benefited. It is a great moral help to all the workers and their families to meet here and acquaint themselves with the high laws that govern our beings, and, to their great credit, they gladly avail themselves of these uplifting opportunities.' Next we went to another room, which was used as a school, where painting, modeling and music were taught. The lady explained that her daughters—having studied the modern sciences, among which were physiognomy and phrenology—had succeeded in discovering among the children of the working class many talents, and they had undertaken to give them free instruction and develop the many natural gifts that would otherwise have been lost. 'My dear sister, I could not resist the impulse to turn to the two daughters and say to them: 'God bless your efforts! For upon the fulfilment of these principles rests the success of the attainment and permanency of the Reconstructive Movement.' 'Thank you, sir,' said the older daughter, 'and we wish everybody could realize—especially the classes that waste so much precious time in worldly frivolities—the real satisfaction and true pleasure one derives by helping one's fellow beings to realize of what life really consists in developing and harmonizing every attribute of intellect, spirit and body.' 'And the transformation,' said the younger one, 'is surprising. Mama, we did not stop to show to the gentleman the dressing rooms.' 'Yes, we must not overlook that important part,' replied the mother. 'We have provided pleasant rooms for the workingmen, where they can clean themselves, change their working clothes and appear decent and respectable after their day's work is done. No one, unless they could witness it, can form an idea of the good influence it exerts upon their minds, and consequently upon their habits.' 'Yes, my dear sir,' said the father, who had been silently assenting to all that was said, 'we are doing our best to prepare the people to march in line with the principles upheld by your great movement, and our most fervent prayer is that all other employers may be enlightened to do their share in helping to bring the needed changes to improve and make perfect the social organism.' 'Your noble example,' I said, 'cannot fail to

bring the greatest results, for right and justice are two powerful forces which will dispel the dark atmosphere created by selfishness and greed in the human mind.' While speaking I noticed a young girl approach the lady, and after a polite bow she told her in a half whisper, 'Pauline is ready.' 'Very well,' answered the lady, 'we will be there directly.' Then turning to me she said: 'Before we leave this place we will go back to the hall, where one of our young elocutionists will recite a poem. I am sorry we have interrupted you. Please continue.' 'I am through, Madame,' I said, 'and shall be very glad to hear the recital of the poem.' 'Then we will start,' said the gentleman. When we reached the hall we took our seats and listened to a piano solo by the young girl who had told the lady that Pauline was ready. Her play was well executed and she gracefully accepted our appreciation. The curtain was then raised and a little seven-year-old girl appeared, dressed in white, with long, golden hair and beautiful, rosy complexion. Every gesture she made was so graceful that she looked like a little fairy. She began:

I was born as free as the silvery light
That laughs in a southern fountain;
Free as the sea-fed bird that nests
On a Scandinavian mountain;
Free as the wind that mocks at the sway
And pinioning clasp of another—
Yet in the slave they scourged today
I saw and knew my brother.

Vested in purple, I sat apart,
But the cord that smote him bruised me;
I closed my ears, but the sob that broke
From his savage breast accused me.
No phrase of reasoning judgment just,
The plaint of my soul could smother—
A creature vile, abased to the dust,
I knew him still—my brother.

And the autumn day that had smiled so fair
Seemed suddenly overclouded;

A gloom more dreadful than nature owns
My human mind enshrouded.
I thought of the power benign that made
And bound men one to another,
And I felt, in my brother's fear, afraid,
And ashamed in the shame of my brother.

"We all heartily applauded. The dear little child had recited the poem very well. Maybe it is not new to you, Olga, or to your friend. The sweet, silvery tones were still ringing in my ears when a young boy stepped forward on the platform. He was a finely built youngster with black, curly hair and black, expressive eyes. He looked around, made a graceful bow, and began to sing in a sweet, sonorous voice, accompanied with music, the following song taken from a reform paper, entitled

THE SONG OF THE WORKERS.

I sing the song of the workers, the men of the brawny arm,
Who give us the daily bread and keep us from hunger's harm;
Who labor afar in the forest, who leaven the fields with toil,
Who take no heed of the sunshine, and mind not sweat or toil.

I sing the song of the workers, who harvest the golden grain,
And bind it and thresh it and sift it, nor care for the sting or stain;
Who load it in creaking wagons, and stoutly their oxen drive,
And bid them good bye as they go, like the bees flying home to the hive.

I sing the song of the workers, the men who struggle and strain;
Who give us their muscle and nerve, as they guard the loaded train;
Who give us their sinew and brain, as they watch the prisoned steam,
And run the risk of their lives, as they pass the perilous stream.

I sing the song of the workers, the men who labor and thrive;

Who handle for us the honey that comes to the human hive;
The patient and tireless workers, with muscles as tough as steel,
Who carry the heaviest burdens, and lift and trundle and wheel.

I sing the song of the workers, demanding for every one
His just and rightful due for all the work he has done—
For all the work of the workers, no matter whom nor where,
To each for the grand result, his honest, proportionate share.

"After the singer had finished and received an enthusiastic applause, the lady said: 'Dear sir, I must confess that when 'vested in purple and sitting apart,' my heart was cold and indifferent to the struggles and the sad life of the toilers, but, as it is expressed in the first poem, 'the cord that smote them bruised me.' The peace and happiness we experienc now was then unknown to us. It is too bad that now-a-days many of the wealthy women are satisfied to pose as sweet angels of charity. All kinds of charitable institutions are, and have always been, the curse that has intensified, instead of removing, the cause of the sorrows and misery of the toilers. Brotherly love and self-abnegation stimulate the limitless capacities of the human spirit; they are the necessary food for the growth of the mind! When we consider the results of these, our small endeavors, and see the transformations already obtained, who can estimate the marvelous changes that the future holds, when the hearts of every one of those who pose as the masters and leaders of society shall be touched by the spark of Divine Love and Justice? Before my thoughts were turned into the right direction I had concluded that life contained only one important point, and that was the attainment of the highest worldly exaltation for 'me and mine;' that money and worldly honors were the sublimest idols, before which my benighted soul had to bow, but now, thank God! His works, from a blade of grass to His highest creation—humanity—stimulate my desire to do all the good I can. When I see and meditate upon the combination of nature's products arranged by human skill into objects of beauty and utility; when I go through the workshops and observe the dexterity with which every branch of work is carried on, and

the work performed by the discoveries of human genius in machinery, my heart beats with great joy, my resolutions become stronger and my views clearer that a complete change is needed in order to give to mankind a chance to develop their limitless capabilities and then we shall see the workshops turned into industrial temples.' My dear sister, I must own that I was deeply touched. What I had seen and heard was fully in accord with my ideas, and by these good people they were already put into operation. I almost felt as if transported into the so much longed for 'New Era.' Here was a woman endowed with strong reasoning powers and a tender heart, the former to convince, the latter to touch the inner chords of the soul! I was ready to make some remarks when I noticed her husband's happy look, his eyes expressing plainly his inner feelings. He said: 'I shall never tire of repeating my first assertion, that in the keeping of women is the salvation or ruin of the world. Let women be united to their right mates, instead of sacrificing their lives to obtain wealth or social position; give them the best opportunities for the development of soul, mind and body, so they can use their powerful influence for good, and then the prophesy that through women the world shall be redeemed, will be fulfilled. Contrasting our present conditions with those of the past, which were filled with—I will not repeat those destroying forces—we can say that we are beginning to enjoy the ever-present kingdom of heaven, manifested in Love, Peace and Harmony!' 'Papa dear,' said the youngest daughter, 'I think this gentleman would be delighted to get acquainted with our friend, the artist. Shall I go and announce his presence.' 'Yes, go, my dear child, so that he will be prepared to receive us. The gentleman my daughter refers to,' said the father, 'is one of the most famous artists of Italy. He has been exiled many times on account of his liberal ideas. He is finishing two remarkable paintings.' The young girl returned and said that the artist would be very glad to meet the gentleman. 'Well, then, let us go to his studio,' said the father, and when we reached the door he rapped softly and a deep-sounding voice was heard saying, 'Please come in.' As the door opened I saw an elderly gentleman and, as the introduction took place, and he heard of my position in the Reconstructive Movement, he made a sign of pleasant surprise, and extending his hand, said: 'I have heard considerable of

the important and able work you have accomplished, and I consider this a great favor, to meet you personally.' The walls of his studio were covered with very artistic paintings. After asking us to be seated, and having noticed that my attention was drawn toward his work, he said: 'How often do we hear that as the human mind broadens our ideals change—that is, our perceptions broaden, pointing toward the great truths—but think of the struggle in order to grasp them when, under the present system, the human mind is filled with low, narrow and bad ideals. I am often surprised when I notice that the so-called higher, or spiritual, reformers plainly describe the wrong conditions but never mention the great necessity for changing the system which prevents the broadening of the human mind, and obtaining and demonstrating the higher ideals. Theo. F. Seward says: 'The American people have two standards or ideals. On the one side is vigor, energy, activity, dominion, conquering circumstances by the strong right arm—the strenuous life—which is an appeal for the strongest possible exercise of the human will. Its standard or ideal of success is 'material' prosperity. The ideal on the other side is exactly the opposite of this. Please listen carefully to this: It sees in the history of mankind a perpetual failure of the human will to give happiness, comfort, peace, or even permanent prosperity. It sees that not only the teachings of the man of Galilee, but the analogies of science, show that the secret of happiness lies in surrendering the finite human will to the Supreme, Eternal Will, and that true success is not to be gained by a strenuous materialistic life, but by a spiritual life.' I am—oh, how often I am—impatient with the 'spiritual' reformers. Why do they not take interest in, why do they not adopt the great principles of the Reconstructive Movement? Why do they spread the empty words of broadening the human mind, when the minds of countless millions are stunted and starved, when countless millions are submerged and oppressed? I cannot express to you how grateful I am when I hear the news of how this great movement is using the power that can be strongly obtained by art, music, poetry and literature, to arouse and inspire human souls to put their determined spirits against the enormity of existing evils, which at present they but vaguely comprehend! From every country in the old continent I receive orders from the Reconstructive Brotherhood to represent the existing conditions

upon canvas, to show as plainly as possible the dreadful contrasts, so as to heal the minds of the masses from the superstitious reverence and awe toward the pretentious demi-gods who, through their close exclusiveless, pretense and sham, have reduced their subjects to an abominable condition. You will please come into the next room, where I am doing some of the work.' Following him we entered a large room, in the middle of which, with the skylight shining upon it, was a large canvas resting upon two easels. As he stood before it he began to explain: 'This is to represent a gala day at Rome. In the background you see the hills. The smoke from the cannons, which have given forth a resounding salvo, can be seen in the distance. This is the royal carriage, and the figureheads are so delicate on account of their idle life that the interchange of courtesies with their humble subjects is too fatiguing, therefore a seat with springs is provided to soften the 'great physical effort.' The footmen, with powdered heads and scarlet liveries, and the flunkies in front of the horses. The regiments marching through the square and saluting the figureheads as they pass by the carriage. Here is the blind crowd which appears frantic, and here is the band heralding the appearance of the running bersaglieri, who fly forward as one man, with their large hats and waving plumes. The stupid crowd,' said the artist, contemptuously, 'ought to know that the flying pace is killing and that in a few years these strong men's lives will be worn out. The pomp and splendor is designed by the figureheads to fascinate the unthinking subjects, to whom it never occurs to put to themselves the question, 'what is the object of these useless spectacles?' Some of these thoughts, we hope, may penetrate their dull minds when a contrast appears before them. It may be more difficult to present it on convas, but I shall use the most modern inventions of moving figures, combined with the productions of the brush, etc. The worldly appearances of useless pomp are intended to renew and cement the servile submissiveness of the whole nation to a demi-god, who assumes the power to control, and who separates and divides the people into classes, the 'upper' ones making their lives a prolonged orgy, gilding their vices, being surrounded with corrupt gaieties; while the millions are deprived of even the necessaries of a simple and plain life. The next paintings will illustrate that all true power resides in the people, to whom is given

when rightly guided and developed, the wisdom to interpret the supreme idea of liberty! We must make the people understand that whatever the forms of privilege, be they wealth or titles, they are assumed to create the external apex of social distinction and thereby destroy human equality. Let me recall the undying words of our beloved apostle of liberty, Joseph Mazzini, that 'When sovereignty and privileges are admitted as existing, not in the whole organism, but only in some self-pretending powers, then the path for usurpation is laid open. The unnatural monarchial element, being incapable of sustaining itself alone by the side of the people, creates the intermediate element called aristocracy, which is the next source of inequality and corruption. History, and the nature of things, teach us that elective monarchy tends to generate anarchy, and hereditary monarchy generates despotism. The people must be made to fully understand that monarchies, from the very nature of things, are antagonistic to their welfare, progress and happiness.' Leading us to another large canvas the artist said: 'This is one which, if I succeed in producing what I saw with my own eyes, will, I hope, touch the hearts of many who are guilty of reducing the lives of their fellow beings to a slow torture. and agony. You probably have read what a journalist said who had also seen the cruel dealings, and who could not restrain his tears at the sight of the awful appearance of the tortured miners. He and one of his friends had descended into an opening that was so narrow and deep that they had to renounce the desire to go any further. It seemed impossible that from the depths of that hole the poor wretches could carry on their shoulders the big loads of minerals. After much searching they found a somewhat wider opening. They descended slowly; the dismal place was oppressive. They had not gone far when they perceived little lamps, carried by human forms, bent nearly double under the heavy loads. The sound of anguished wailing reached their ears. It emanated from the helpless victims. Cadenced groans from tender creatures, panting and exhausted, no longer able to ascend—but on they had to go. The sound of the whip was kept around their ears, and the burning lamps were mercilessly put to their emaciated limbs! The bruised skin of the back and shoulders could be seen. Some were found crouching on the steps silently weeping, the tears rolling down their pale, sunken cheeks. Such barbarity cries for

retribution! Those poor slaves were not only deprived of everything a human being needs, but they became victims of horrible diseases! This inhuman state of affairs existed under the monarchial regime of one of the latin nations—Italy. Under the English monarchy the same condition was discovered. Wages had been so reduced that women and children were compelled to toil in the mines. Women were literally unsexed. They were forced to crawl on their fours and haul carts by means of straps passed between their legs, and belted around them. If some children were born in those mines they never saw the light of the sky—being born, reared and buried in those subterranean hells! But what is more heartrending, it seems to me, is that greed, vulgar greed, rules this free land—a land which every lover of human rights has exalted with the greatest tenderness, and if we cannot redeem this great country from that crushing monster, where shall we look for salvation? If you permit me, I will read this clipping, which has reached me lately, and from which I expect to draw many points to produce upon the pictures: 'Talk about African slavery! The slaves in the south were a happy and free race compared with tens of thousands of wretched toilers! A worse form of slavery is kept up right now in the great coal fields. Strike? Good God! Yes, strike! Their condition recalls the condition of the miners in the north of England some years ago. It is the world-old story of one set of men oppressing another set. It is the same trait in perverted human nature that made French nobles oppress the French peasants. It is the same trait that made English landlords grind the last potato out of Irish tenants and then eject them when the potatoes were all gone. It is the insatiable human greed for everything in sight.' I have a pile of extracts from excellent reform papers which inspire my mind to create, and what I consider will help to awaken the needed enthusiasm. Here is one from the founder of the first woman's club in America, the venerable lady, Mrs. Caroline M. Severance, who said: 'Let me add, dear friends, to my words of welcome, the assurance of my undiminished but growing faith in woman's capacity and efforts towards social betterment in all lines. Remember the striking sentence from the great orator, seer and patriot, Wendel Phillips, 'You may build an institution of the strongest granite, and rear it to the sky, and the pulse-beat of a young girl may level it to the ground.' We

read the proof of this in many pages of history. Let us stand solidly for peace and against the injustices of our day. It is our holy mission, as women, as wives and mothers and defenders of the homes!' When I read or hear what the progressive women of the twentieth century are doing I become thoroughly convinced that the raging conflicts of the capitalists against the toilers must cease, and no longer will they tear apart the family's holy bonds, and they will be the great co-operators helping to push the modern wheel of progress, which will spread with marvelous rapidity the saving principles of Reconstruction—and here we have the living example of a mother and two daughters.' 'You are right, indeed you are,' said the husband. 'With their help the cruel conflicts which cause the ever increasing poverty, crime and disease must cease! An then will 'Lafayette's Prayer for America' be verified where he said: 'May this immense temple of freedom stand as a lesson to oppressors, and an example to the oppressed, and a sanctuary for the rights of mankind.' 'My dear mother, said the oldest daughter, 'you know how often we speak of the dynamic power of thoughts and words. I must own that I feel the effects. I feel as if I must enter into the open field of reform——. 'By the way, my dear,' said the mother, 'read the essay you have written and this gentleman may suggest some ideas.' 'Would the gentleman be willing to listen to it?' she asked. 'Most assuredly,' I answered. She retired and soon returned, holding in her right hand the manuscript. 'I know this is nothing new to you,' she said, modestly, and began to read:

"'When the fathers of this country established the constitution, they solemnly stated that it was to establish justice, insure domestic tranquility, promote the general welfare and secure the blessings of liberty to themselves and their posterity. These expressions denoted their moral advancement. This showed that they understood how to govern themselves, and that they were ready to throw down every yoke and institute a free government. Our forefathers fought and made great sacrifices to free themselves from monarchial oppression, which proved to the world their moral grandeur, for they knew that only in a free republic can humanity grow and develop itself. Over a century ago men felt the degredation to which they were doomed, and rebelled against their oppressors; and today, in the present twentieth cen-

tury, they know that the destiny of humanity is to advance toward a future of enlightenment, peace and happiness—in fact toward a universal brotherhood—and the twentieth century women know that their co-operation is needed. Women now realize the inconsistency, the injustice, of being excluded from taking part in the work which alone will give permanence to the free institutions which alone can make it possible for the people to put into daily practice the high principles that will lead toward human perfection. With the progress of the age, they become conscious that liberty and equality, in order to accomplish all the good in the world, must include the whole human family. Their keen sense of justice makes it plain to them that privileges and arbitrary rules are a violation of the principles of freedom, and, therefore, they boldly protest against human rights being confined to the masculine portion of the race. Women, like men, must think deeply and arm themselves with deep knowledge, and especially must women demonstrate that they are no longer the weak-minded, frivolous and superstitious beings of the past. They must listen to the earnest calls which the advancing civilization makes upon them for their co-operation in all the important affairs of life. They must remember that men have fought, have spread torrents of human blood, and little by little they have forgotten their duties and allowed personal ambition to destroy true patriotism, and finally sunk into a worse kind of serfdom. This advancing and retrograding condition will continue until women, whom nature has made the vestibule of life, shall attain the high, the moral and intellectual position to which they are entitled. Garibaldi, that celebrated patriot, appealed to the powerful help of the women of Sicily, and not in vain! In that blessed isle, he said, the gentle sex has given, in all epochs, such proofs of courage as to astonish the world! American women! we owe a great duty to the world, for we have thus far the best form of government on earth. We have the greatest opportunities for self-improvement, and the success of the Reconstructive Movement will depend, without the slightest doubt, upon the attitude of the women. May they be induced, for the permanent salvation of the human family, to take hold of that glorious movement, which will establish the twentieth century's 'new social, political, religious and industrial system!' American women, let us hold this sentence, expressed by one of the great reformers, constantly before our

mind, "that the women of this land should be as 'One' in favor of this movement. It means more to them than it does to the men. The longing for freedom that is in the hearts of the millions of women in America will be answered after the dawn of the better day.' Let us also remember what Aristotle said: 'That whenever the people of any nation will allow any man, or set of men, to put up toll-gates on the highways of a nation, the tribute receivers will become richer and richer, and the tribute payers will become poorer and poorer, and eventually become the slaves of the tribute receivers.' When asked what was the remedy, he replied: 'Make them take the toll-gates down. But they should never have been allowed to put them up.'

" 'This is as far as I have gone,' said the young lady, 'but while reading, some new thoughts have flashed through my mind, which might, perhaps, be better adapted.' My dear sister, you may well imagine how many sincere compliments the young writer received, and how my soul rejoices when meeting such nobly disposed people. And now I will close this long communication. Inclosed you will find an article by that good man, Victor Hugo, which is worth reading until it remains impressed on the mind so as never to be forgotten. Good bye——"

"Here it is," said Ernestine, taking it up and unfolding it. 'It is not very long, shall I read it?"

"Yes, please do," said her friend.

TO THE RICH, AND TO THE POOR.

BY VICTOR HUGO.

"I am asked what has been the lesson of my life, which I have learned in my years of living to bequeath as my most precious legacy to humanity? I reply that my soul has two messages of counsel, of promise and of threat to deliver—one to the rich and the other to the poor. The two contain the sum of human wisdom.

"To the rich: The poor cry out to the wealthy. The slaves implore the rulers. And as much now as in the days of Spartan Helots. I am one of them, and I add my voice to that multitude, that it may reach the ears of the rich. Who am I? One of the people. From whence come I? From the bottomless pit. How am I named? I am wretchedness. My lords, I have something to say to you. My lords, you are placed high. You have power, opu-

lence, pleasures, unlimited authority, undivided enjoyments, a total forgetfulness of others. So be it. But there is something below you. Above you, perhaps. My lords, I impart to you a novelty. The human race exists! I am he who comes from the depths. My lords, you are the great and the rich. That is dangerous. You take advantage of the night. But take care; there is a great power —the morning. The dawn cannot be vanquished. It will come. It comes! you are the dark crowds of privilege. Be scared. The True Master will knock at the door. Who is the father of privileges? Chance. Who is the son? Abuse. Neither chance nor abuse is lasting. Both of them have an evil tomorrow. I come to warn you. I come to denounce you in your false bliss. It is made out of the misery of others. Your paradise is made out of the hell of the poor. I come to open before you the grand assizes of the poor—the soverign who is the slave, the convict who is the judge. I am bowed down under what I have to say. Where shall I begin? I know not. I am a diver, and I bring up from the depths a pearl, the Truth. I speak because I know. I have had experiences. I have seen. Suffering? No! The word is weak. Poverty? I have grown up in it. Winter? I have shivered in it. Famine? I have tasted it. Scorn? I have undergone it. Plague? I have suffered it. Shame? I have drunk it. I feel compelled to come to you. Why? Because of my rage yesterday. Perhaps it was to force me to raise my voice among the satiated that God commingled me with the hungry ones. Oh, have pity! Oh! you do not know this unhappy world in which you believe that you belong, for you are too high above it. I will tell you what it is. Abandoned an orphan, alone in this boundless creation, I made an entry into this gloom you call society. The first thing I saw was the law under the form of a gibbet; the second was wealth—your wealth—under the form of a woman; the third was luxury in the shape of a hunted man chained against a prison wall; the fourth were your palaces, beneath the shadow of which cowered the tramps. The human race has been formed by you slaves and convicts. You have made of this earth a dungeon. Life is wanting, air is wanting, virtue is wanting. The toilers of this world, whose fruits you enjoy, live in death. There are little girls who are made prostitutes at the age of eight years, and who end at the age of twenty by old age. Who of you have been at Newcastle-on-Tyne?

There are men in mines who chew coal to fill the stomach and cheat hunger. Look you in Lancashire—misery everywhere. Are you aware that at Burton-Lazars there are lepers driven into the woods and are fired at if they come out of the dens? In Peckridge, where there are no beds in the hovels, and holes are dug in the ground for the little children to sleep in so that instead of beginning with the cradle they begin with the grave? Mercy, have mercy for the poor! Oh! I conjure you, have pity! But, no, you will not! I know you all! To your golden thrones have gone up for ages the cry of misery, the groan of hunger, and the sob of despair, and you heeded it not. The misery thou hast caused shall be meted out to thee in turn. Bear in mind that a series of kings, armed with swords, were interrupted by Cromwell with an axe. Tremble! Dissolution draws near! The clipped talons push out again; the torn-out tongues reappear; they become tongues of flame. Paradises built over hells totter. Ah! The social system is false. True society must come. Then there will be no more lords, there will be free, living men! There will be no wealth, there will be abundance for all. There will be no more masters, but brothers. This is the "Future." No more prostration. No more abasement, no more ignorance, no more beasts of burden, no more courtiers—but Light!

"To the poor: Shall I now speak to the poor after having in vain appealed to the rich? Yes, I must. This, then, have I to say. There is one rule for the rich—to do nothing; and one for the poor—to say nothing. The poor have but one friend—silence. They must use but one monosyllable—yes. To confess and to concede, these are all the rights they have. Only the rich have the right to be happy. The rich man claims, when young, he has the rights of old age; when old, he has the lucky chances of the youth; doing nothing, he controls the production of the toilers. The toilers fight, where is the glory? The rulers receive from the people a crown piece and return a farthing. The capitalist who steals the reward of labor pretends to be a king as well as the man of blood. Where is the happiness to have to work forever for bread and water? Being poor we are ignorant; being ignorant we are blind. What is society? Misery for us if we support it. Be reasonable, poor men, you were not made to be slaves."

After having finished the reading, Ernestine laid it down and folded her hands, and said: "I wish I could express and make a

record of the torrent of thoughts that are aroused in one's mind when such living ideas are presented. Great Heavens! It does not seem possible that humanity has submitted so blindly to all manner of injustices, that it has not been able, after such terrible struggles, to gain the right path which leads to permanent happiness! My dear friend, I firmly believe that the hour is at hand for every woman whose heart is ready to help in promoting the needed changes in the world, that they will earnestly set their minds at work to post themselves, not superficially, but deeply, to acquire the information that will enable them to become powerful agents, and perform the new duties demanded by the new civilization. I shall obey my parents if I can, but I am prepared to meet any obstacle and never yield to anything opposed to the principles of the Reconstructive Movement. I am prepared to meet the opposition that I will have to face on my arrival home, but the useful knowledge that I have so Providentially acquired, will strengthen my resolution to devote my whole life to help the dear human family to realize their rights, their duties, and the permanent rewards which will be bestowed upon all as the natural consequence of upright and virtuous living, and your assistance, my good friend——"

"Yes, and my brother's," interrupted Olga.

"Yes, your good brother's," replied Ernestine, but she stopped suddenly, and with a strong effort she seemed to resist something. After a few seconds, in a gentle voice, she said: "A glorious vision was ready to appear, but I did not dare to receive it."

"You ought not to resist the precious gift you possess, my dear," said Olga. "A gift of piercing into the future is too valuable. Now I hardly think we will hear from my brother again, for the time of our departure for the great republic is approaching. We will no doubt hear from our friends, Mme. Konrad and Miss Florence, and in order to be posted on everything, let us meet every evening," and after accompanying Ernestine to the door, they retired.

CHAPTER XVI.

As they expected, the next evening, as they met, each one had received a letter.

"What a blessing," said Olga, as she offered a chair to her friend "does not this news always keep the sacred fire of reform a-burning? This one is from our beloved friend, Mme. Konrad, and yours is from whom?"

"From the one you mentioned last evening."

"Miss Florence? Indeed!"

"Yes; and you will please read yours first."

"Very well," said Olga, and she began:

"'My Dearly Beloved Friends: I presume you are getting, or are ready for the long journey; so are we. I hope that the anticipation of the journey to America has not stirred you up as it has the young authoress. Her vivid imagination astonishes me, I must confess. Her enthusiasm is affecting, in spite of one's efforts to remain passive. If it suits you, we have decided to be ready to start within one week. My dear friends, I feel convinced that you, like the other two young ladies, will continue to lend your assistance to the great Movement of Reconstruction, which is making such a powerful and morally healthful impression upon the hearts of the people. If it were not that we are soon to meet, I would write to you many remarkable events which are transpiring, and giving new hope and fresh enthusiasm to the untiring workers. I know you will be delighted to meet the authoress again. No obstacles can affect her determination to move onward. She looks deeply beneath the surface of what is called today 'the great progress of the race,' and philanthropy—so-called—which so easily misleads the people. She understands so perfectly well what every thinking individual must admit, that 'false ideals and false ideas have filled the world with dreadful calamities.' You ought to hear her when she expresses her views concerning the unfounded claims of the great progress of the race under the present system; the modern philanthropy which

creates again false ideals and false ideas, erecting homes for the homeless, reformatories for the 'redemption' of the fallen; she strongly denounces those who waste their time and means in this useless patch-work. Would the true, the real progress, with its elevating and strengthening influence, cause the downfall of the numberless unfortunate ones? Would it not give, she says, what she read in a reform magazine, 'rest without weariness, peace without fear, comfort without strife, life without sorrow; would not that 'real progress' give health, permanent prosperity to all, and thereby good, only good? ' She has become a prominent supporter of the principles of the Brotherhood of Reconstruction, and her actions are giving the world a living example of their saving power. She has succeeded in redeeming cases that had been given up as totally lost by philanthropic institutions. She has not only redeemed them from their moral downfall, but kindled the warmest enthusiasm in their hearts for the success of the Reconstructive Principles. She presented to them and made them understand life in its true light. Life of harmony, peace and usefulness, and free from destitution and sorrow. She makes them fully understand that the people, when properly developed, can operate prodigies; upon them rests all power and goodness, but when lacking enlightenment, being misled, they are often ready to stone their defenders. My dear friends, if you are ready, we will look for your arrival next week. Good bye.' "

"Now read yours," said Olga, "I am anxious to hear it," and Ernestine quickly began:

" 'My Dear Friends: I hope you have read what an inspired individual said, that 'Not to love is not to live, or it is to live a living death.' The life that radiates with love to all is the life of richness, and continually growing in beauty and larger in its scope and influence. Oh, how my soul wishes that the so-called eminent high classes could understand those great truths! And why, I like to ask, why do not those who are called modern prophets join the Reconstructive Movement, when they so plainly predict and see the increased sway of materialism, greed for wealth, and they claim to see this baleful, increasing influence in the colleges, churches, mar-

ket places, everywhere? How can they state that the 'blood and iron' policy of Bismarck, of force and ambition, or might instead of right, and to the victors the spoils, has been adopted, not only in Europe, but also in America, and proclaim the dreadfully gloomy condition of the twentieth century, and are not willing to help to change the present wrong system? My dear friends, I do not doubt that you feel, as I do, an irresistible desire to start toward the great land of the free, where the efforts of the reformers meet with greater success than anywhere else, and where the women are more receptive and surely will enter in line of the great saving movement.'

"'Why is it that the so-called eminent prophets are so short sighted? Can they not understand that the present system is the cause of all the evils they describe? Can they not see that the invention of machinery, which ought to be a blessing to all, increases the number of proletarians, who must starve, not being able to find work, and it induces the capitalists to become more and more soulless? Why can they not, or will they not, understand what our movement teaches, that the instruments of collective labor must be owned collectively by the whole people, by the Co-operative Commonwealth, in which every worker shall have the free exercise and the full benefit of his labor? Would they not, then, become conscientious and hard workers in the Reconstructive Movement, and that work being so high and grand, would it not be easier for them to become untiring in their efforts, and would they not labor with an ever-increasing zeal? Think what a great help it would be to successfully check and pull down the wild speculations and false idols of humanity! But how can they be checked and pulled down, as a Jewish rabbi has said, as long as wealth and fashion weaken and ruin woman's moral nature? It has been proven long enough that when women are ruled by that ambition, they no longer demand purity of heart, sincerity of motives, nobility of sentiments, and their lives are spent in erecting artificial distinction in human society, which constantly creates impediments and obstacles to the struggling masses, who strive to march forward, and they are marked by the heartless so-called 'higher classes' as plebians, and but little better than the cattle. Only the superficial observers fail to see the important fact that woman's help is needed in this age of restlessness and discontent. I will repeat what I have heard

club women say, 'that they believe that happiness increases when they broaden their lives with interests outside of the homes, and feed their intellects as well as their morals. How they believe in organization and co-operation, which brings a broader influence concerning social conditions; how they are raised above the aimless and selfish atmosphere of existence, and they learn how to conduct their homes more wisely, and how to preserve more carefully their energies, and accept with better understanding their great responsibilities in the world, and that to preserve the integrity of the home is to preserve the integrity of the nation. These good women will then assist in exposing the great evils which threaten the people by the dreadful speed with which the wealth of the nation is being grabbed by the few conscienceless and heartless individuals, and they will see that the only way of deliverance will be reached by putting into practice the principles of the Reconstructive Movement. These good women will learn, as you, my good friends, and I have learned, that the members of this great movement lose no sight of anything that will help to accelerate the redemption of our fellow beings, how they utilize every talent in all the lines of reform. What I will mention now is something new, but very useful to me. One day I went with one of the members to a place where she had to attend to some business. While waiting a little woman appeared. When she perceived us, she stopped suddenly, and although a total stranger, her face seemed to reflect so much humor, satire and love of fun that she attracted at once my companion's attention. She asked the little woman some questions and her answers were so full of mirth that we could not help being affected by it. My friend concluded at once not to lose sight of her, as she was endowed with a large-sized faculty of mirth, a faculty worth cultivating, like any other, and she informed me that several of the same kind already belong to the Brotherhood, and how much good they are accomplishing; how science teaches that this faculty helps to ascertain truth by perceiving the ridiculousness, inherent absurdity and incongruity of falsehood and evil, besides presenting truth and goodness in a pleasing, pungent and good-provoking manner. Science asserts that 'ridicule,' when used in the proper way, becomes a most effective weapon against errors and opponents; that the 'public' can often be laughed out of error into a better way by well-aimed shafts of ridicule, although nothing else might arouse it; that 'the

fashions' must disappear if we look to them as the sharp-shooters. Think, my dear friends, what a relief for women! The normal promptings of mirth, we are taught, are heaven's choice blessings, and must be cultivated like all other faculties. Progress and virtue demand the exercise of all human faculties, and this important fact is fully acknowledged by our wise movement. It did not require much effort to induce the factious little woman to become interested in this unique reform work, and everyone who has come in contact with her admirers her splendid qualities. She has already reached her middle age, and has lived all those years in mental obscurity, her natural talents unappreciated and neglected, but now, you ought to see the wonderful change! Would to heaven that the people could understand that the present system cannot create the environments so necessary to the development of all human minds. From a reform paper I quote the following, which I know you will appreciate, as we all do: 'The spirit of brotherhood is upon the members of the Reconstructive Movement, because the spirit of freedom has annointed them to preach the good tidings unto the meek. He has sent them to bind up the broken hearted, to proclaim liberty to the wage slaves, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound; to proclaim the acceptable year of the co-operative commonwealth, and if they listen carefully to the inner voice of the spirit, the day of permanent freedom to the oppressed and permanent comfort to all that mourn, is at hand. Our good and generous friend, Mme. Konrad, who knows so well that music and song infuse new life and vigor, and disseminates high influences through the entire being, and how, under this wrong system, the masses of the poor rarely enjoy this holy spell and foretaste of heaven, in which the whole soul becomes melted with holy tenderness, and how music can do more to induce humanity to do good than all else combined, she has succeeded in finding a number of talented young boys and girls, whom she has placed where their musical talents and their fine voices will be cultivated, and these refining sentiments, she knows, will be the means, under the Reconstructive System, to banish selfishness and carnality and promote moral and spiritual elevation. This good lady has studied everything; you ought to hear her when she explains the analysis and cultivation of tune; how to cultivate music is to overcome evil tendencies and sensual inclinations, and develop the finer emotions and higher as-

pirations, and, like all the other faculties, they must be carefully cultivated and not perverted. Our beloved young friend and active worker, Armida, is really an intense and fervent singer. Mme. Konrad has decided to send her to Milano, and in due time she will be one of the inspiring leaders in our movement. It is really sad when we learn how, under the present system, everything is spoiled, or entirely artificial. Everything is distorted and strained, so it is no wonder that song and music enkindles so little emotion, love and fervor in concerts, theatres and churches. We are told that angels live in song, and as women approximate nearer to them than any other earthly creature, our blessed movement will provide them with every chance to develop that power that will inspire the souls with love and wisdom. Then will the twentieth century be ready to receive the message indicating the supremacy of spirit over matter, and then the true meaning of life will be understood. This very instant I receive the news from Mme. Konrad that within a few days we shall, if convenient to you, start toward your native country, and I know what a great delight it will be for all of us to meet again, so, hastily, I say good bye. Your loving friend, Florence."

Olga and her friend remained silent and seemed deeply absorbed in their thoughts, when, finally, Olga said:

"How very pleasant are the thoughts of the great good that can be accomplished by helping one another. You, my good friend, have helped Florence to become a useful member of society, and she has saved Armida from a wretched and dangerous condition——"

"And you," said Ernestine, "have been my strong guide; you have led me into the right path. You are right. Great good can be accomplished by helping one another, and I think, or rather, I am convinced, of the truth which one of the great characters in America expressed in a famous letter in regard to the irresistible influence of the press in moulding public opinion. 'Were it left to me to decide,' said he, 'whether we should have a government without newspapers, or newspapers without government, I should not hesitate a moment to prefer the latter. Without the press, free government could not survive the mutations that are constantly taking place. But with this watchful guardian, the attempt to overthrow a free government, once established, is practically impossible.' Now think, my dear friend, of the glorious future, when the best writers, artists, musicians, singers, in fact, every gifted

being shall be willing to exercise the precious talents in order to reach and develop the best qualities, which lay dormant, for want of proper moral sustenance, in the great human family. It certainly presents visions to our minds of a complete transformation."

"Oh, yes!" exclaimed Olga, "how easily could the crises of centuries, which are at hand, be overcome if really the press would do its duty! Listen to these articles I have received. One is entitled "Money Drunkenness." They describe the evils but suggest no remedy. Listen: "Eight of every ten who fight in the business arena bite the saw dust. For men fight today as they fought in the arenas of Rome and Antioch, and eighty of the one hundred are carried out dead or defeated. Why? Because of competition. Because of extravagance, bad habits and many other things. But largely because of speculation. Read the list of the victims of the get-rich-quick swindles. Men, women and children, all trying to get something for nothing. And there is gambling on the board of trade where the maelstrom swallows men alive. We are a nation of speculators. The craving for wealth becomes a disease. Men are money-drunk.'

"Is it not dreadful? And why does not the daily press mould the public opinion by making it understand that nothing but the co-operative system or the Reconstructive principles will save mankind from the destroying competitive system, extravagance and evil habits. Listen to this other article:

THE POWER BEHIND THE THRONE.

"Judge, I'm low enough, goodness knows, but my wife is meaner. She has stolen dollars where I have stolen cents. She taught me this meanness." so spoke a criminal in a court the other day, and the police say he is right about his wife. On the same day the will of a prominent man was read. In it was this passage: "I owe everything I have—character and property—to my wife." Whether or not the criminal first corrupted his wife, or she gave him lessons in crime, it matters not. She outran him in evil and dragged him after her. Whether or not the testator spoken of was better or worse, morally, than his wife, he undoubtedly owed her all he expressed in his will. It is a question of force, and woman is the greater force. Woman's influence is the dynamo of power. The forces for good and evil are hidden in the homes.

"Here, again, the press describes the great wrongs, but does it suggest a remedy? Does it not know, or does it not care to mould the public opinion by making it understand that the forces for evil are nourished and increased by the present abominable system? A great truth was expressed by Longfellow when he said:

"'Were half the power that fills the world with terror;
Were half the wealth bestowed on camps and courts
Given to redeem the human mind from error,
There were no need for arsenals and forts.
The warrior's name would be a name abhorred,
And every nation that should lift again
Its hand against a brother, on its forehead
Would wear, forever more, the curse of Cain!'"

"Now that our minds are fully made up to become active workers in this movement, let us do our very best to strengthen one another."

"Yes," said Ernestine, "I feel that I will need your assistance, for the struggle will begin anew when I reach home, and we will now retire," and so they did.

At the appointed day and hour the anxious travelers finally caught sight of each other, and the sincere joy expressed by everyone was really affecting. Everything having been arranged, they soon arrived on board and occupied their assigned place, and from beginning to end it proved a delightful journey. They decided that when they arrived on land, they would act as strangers and no one should know anything about their intimacy and their ideas of the reform movement until the time was favorable. With great rejoicing they heard that they were nearing the shore of the new continent. A hearty farewell was taken before they landed. Ernestine was closely watching the people who were waiting for the arrival of the passengers, when she noticed a fine carriage containing two ladies. Immediately she recognized her mother, and in due time the footman descended and opened the carriage, while she went, almost flying, and was received by her mother with open arms, expressing the tenderest mother's feelings.

"Where is papa?" exclaimed her daughter.

"He is at home, waiting for you. And now I want to intro-

duce you to this lady, Miss Rogie, the daughter of a prominent family, and I hope you will become good friends."

The young lady was endowed with a lively disposition, and actually entertained her young friend till they reached the home, and as they ascended the broad steps they noticed the father, who was standing at the entrance watching them, with a peculiar expression on his countenance.

"What is the matter?" asked his wife. "Are you not glad to see your daughter?"

"Certainly," he said, and gave her a hearty welcome. "Her presence," he said, in a low tone, turning to his wife, "is as strong a reproach to me as it was before she left."

"Nonsense!" she said, and turning to the young girls, asked them to follow her. She went through all the rooms of the fine mansion, and would point out one set after another, and describe the enormous prices required to give the home such a charming and magnificent appearance, and she would watch her closely to see the effect it would produce upon her.

"Well," she said, after they had gone through, "what do you think, and how do you like your new home?"

Ernestine remained silent for a while, and then began to appear the peculiar expression. which impressed her mother very unpleasantly, and shaking her vigorously, she said:

"Do you still yield to the old superstitions? shame on you!"

Without saying another word she rang a bell, a maid appeared, and she ordered her to take the young lady to her room.

"Pardon me, dear mother," said Ernestine, "I do not believe I am troubled with superstition, but the sight of all these magnificent products of human skill and labor filled my soul with admiration and respect for their great talent and genius, and, I think, they are the ones who ought to be surrounded by all this beauty and elegance, which certainly would inspire them to obtain new inventions, and beautify everything more and more——"

"Hush, you foolish girl," whispered her mother in her ear. "No wonder your father feels uneasy. Go and rest, and we will see to it that you become more reasonable," and without waiting for any other remarks, she left the room.

About two weeks after her arrival, Ernestine succeeded in sending a letter to her friend, Olga, who did not open it until she was in

the presence of Mme. Konrad, and both were delighted to receive news from their beloved friend, and then she read the following:

"My Dear Friend: I must begin my letter with an apology. Already two weeks have passed—it seems hardly possible. And what have I done during this time? I am ashamed to say I have done nothing worth mentioning. Had I not had the good fortune to be surounded by good influences during my stay in Switzerland; had I not learned the real mission of one's life, I do not know into what confusion and excitement and dissatisfied existence I would have been plunged. The expensive pastimes, the gorgeous attire, the whole turnout so lavish and exclusive, calls for nothing in the human heart but blind ambition and absolute selfishness. Such sights carried on by a class, moneyed aristocracy or leisure class, as it is called abroad, are in every way detrimental. They not only are not satisfied in all their extravagance, but they search for more satisfaction in self-aggrandizement, and spending thus the precious time given 'to all for self-improvement,' produces greater evils than the world has thus far realized. When we start out among the wrongly-called 'common people,' in our handsome coaches with four thoroughbred horses, and everyone attired in the gayest fashion, one can notice the expressions of envy in some, awe in others, and the tendency to stifle the hope of ever rising from a condition of constant anxiety and struggle for daily bread. The experiences I am going through are intensifying in my soul the principles promulgated by the blessed Reconstructive Movement. Many times I cannot prevent a feeling of depression when I see the manner in which the girls of this class are trained. To their young and receptive hearts are never given even a ray of the elevating ideas which open the soul to the comprehensiveness of the universal good, the universal love, which would lead to perfection the great Unit of the human family. How pitiful that, through lack of understanding, they set limits to the genuine happiness! And who, then, have the most morbid inclinations in the wrong direction? I am sorry to say, what has been confirmed so often, women! And now, more than ever, I become convinced that in order to carry on the great reform movement, that neglected force must be put into activity. My dear friend, you have no idea how my heart longs to be with you again. My sincere love to Mme. Konrad. Maybe you were surprised to receive my letter by a young lady; I am sorry I cannot

risk to send it to you through the postoffice, and you understand the reason why, and when you write to me please address the letter to her. I can rely entirely upon that good, young friend. I hope I shall soon hear from you. Very sincerely yours, Ernestine."

"I dō wish, myself," said Mme. Konrad, "that the good young girl could be with us, for your brother has certainly directed us to the right place."

"I am surprised," said Olga, "that she has not mentioned something in regard to the great reception that her parents are going to give in honor of the distinguished Russian nobleman; you know he has informed us how the press had discovered who he was, and as he no longer appears incognito, he met Ernestine's father at a banquet given by a number of capitalists, and now, their wives and daughters are taking advantage of every opportunity to surpass one another in entertaining the foreign titled gentleman. Perhaps her mother has not informed her yet. You know, my brother courteously accepts all invitations, and he makes the most careful study of the situation. The reception that Ernestine's parents will give in his honor, according to the comments of the press, will surpass in luxury every one that has thus far been extended to him. I am anxious to see him, and so is he; he wants to consult and decide what would be best, whether we shall be introduced into the high society or remain and perform our work, as we have commenced it, in this quite unpretentions way. I wrote to him that I felt sure that you were in favor of it, at least until something else turns up."

"You are right," replied the lady, "and I was going to tell you to send to our friend a book, an excellent book, published in this country, and I wish her mother would read it; who knows but it might awaken new ideas in her mind? There is one passage which says: 'Why not relate all the good and great things that women have done?' Did not George Grote say that his history of Greece would never have been written but for his wife's devotion, the encouragement of her presence, and the assistance supplied by her intelligent assiduity? And the wife of Edmund Burke; did he not find in her such comfort and helpfulness that he was led to exclaim: 'Every care vanishes the moment I enter under my own roof'? And the poet, Moore; what would he have been without his

self-denying, tender, devoted and sensible Bessy? 'I would not exchange my poverty with Catherine for all the riches of Croesus without her,' said Luther. Guizot, the statesman and historian, was cheered in the trials of an arduous career by the loving faithfulness of a noble-hearted helpmate. I could mention so many other good things, but I know you will read the book yourself and then send it to her."

A few days later Mme. Konrad, Olga and her brother were enjoying a pleasant afternoon; Ivanohe was relating many of his experiences, and one of the last was an invitation to attend a meeting of the Reconstructive Brotherhood. The attendance was, he said, large, and composed of a very earnest and intelligent membership They are well drilled and very enthusiastic, and determined to carry on the work to a perfect success. Speeches were made which showed the true spirit of reform. Reports were made of men, women, boys and girls, who used to live an aimless life, although they were gifted in many ways, and since they have come into the encouraging and well-ordered rules of the Brotherhood, they show a remarkable change and satisfaction in their new life, and many say they feel as if they were born again. The principles of this Brotherhood furnish them the light which makes them realize their 'true being.' With joy and strength they cast off the awful burdens of selfishness, greed and malice. When I was called to make some remarks, I could not help repeating what I had read not long ago: 'It was the women who first went to find the Lord, showing that to women the risen truth was to be first revealed. They took with them spices and ointments, types of thoughts, fragrant with love, purity and devotion, and the more they became conscious of their power to promote the good, the more they demonstrated the true meekness of heart, and they are now gaining and spreading the saving principles that increase higher and enduring joys, better aims, holy peace and a constant renewal of energy.' I also related what I had heard in labor organizations; the resolutions passed by them against the attitude taken by some of the churches, who denounce the organizations as dangerous, and they thought they were forced to say with Victor Hugo, to turn their backs to the church, that they may turn their faces to God. And they have stated that the organized labor unions of America are working for the good of humanity, doing more good, morally, and

bettering the conditions of the people, making possible the better education of the masses, aiding in building more everlasting monuments of true Christianity, than all the religious denominations of the country. And how plainly their resolutions show that the labor unions are ready to adopt the principles of the Reconstructive Movement, and let us rejoice, for every effort made to lead the people into the path of righteousness brings a new promise which will result in the redemption of the human race."

"Someone is at the door," said Olga, and as she opened the door she found the young lady, who handed her a second letter from Ernestine. She was invited to come in, but she said she had to return home immediately. Olga thanked her, and taking her seat, she opened the letter and real it aloud: "'My Beloved Friend: This morning my mother told me she had engaged one of the most fashionable modistes, who is to make my garments in the best style so I may appear and make the most favorable impression upon the titled gentleman who has come from Russia, and is making a tour through the country. And every prominent family, that is, generally speaking, the mothers, are taking every opportunity to secure the honor of providing a titled husband for their marriageable daughters. She expects me to second her in every way so we may succeed in fascinating him, and then, her long cultivated ambition may be crowned with success. She is entirely ignorant that I am acquainted with your brother. I shall certainly be glad to see him, and how glad would I be if you and Mme. Konrad would also come! Good bye.'"

"This is one of the most important events in a man's or a woman's life," said Ivanohe, "but unfortunately it is not considered in that light among the so-called upper classes. I have the greatest respect and admiration for that young lady, for I know she is entirely free from affectation and worldly ambition. We shall wait and see what will result from the plans arranged by her mother. I will now relate to you my latest experience concerning the discovery of some neglected human talent. It is surprising to think that no one can take a look around without discovering all kinds of useful faculties. On my way home one day in the town where I attended the meeting, I saw a man driving a team. I watched and followed him at a short distance. He stopped near a house and

began to unload some barrels of oil. His appearance was, of course, greasy and soiled. He had pushed his hat back and his intelligent forehead and expressive eyes called my attention more closely. I walked nearer to where he was, saluted him, and asked him some questions, which he answered with much precision. I asked him why he did not fill some other position, having been endowed by nature with a large brain, indicating intellectual abilty. He stopped, crossed hs arms, and began staring me in the face. I noticed that his mind was stirred up. I kept silent and he said: 'You are right, sir. I have the greatest desire to exercise my brain. I am not satisfied with this kind of work, but what can a poor man do? I must earn my living, and here comes another one who is as unfortunate as I am. We have both been planning how to acquire more means so we might obtain a chance to buy some books, and that fellow would be a musical genius if he had the opportunity to make a study in that line.' The other man was approaching with his team, his face was black and his clothes nearly saturated with oil. He was whistling and beating time with his feet. When he came down from his seat and saw me, he bowed very respectfully, and I remarked to him: Your friend tells me that you are a musical genius. 'Oh, I am crazy after music, in fact, everything sounds musical to me, even the heavy steps of the horses and the noise of the wagon, all set me going and I must either whistle, sing, or beat the time, and music—oh, it carries me up above the earth.' It was not necessary for him to explain it, and quickly I made up my mind to assist them to obtain the positions that would benefit them as well as the rest. At the meeting of the Brotherhood I mentioned those cases, and an interesting discussion followed. The necessary steps were taken to enable the two young men, and others that were mentioned, to cultivate their good qualities, which will bless them with happiness and we feel positive they will be good workers in our movement. I see that you are employing your time so well, and although the task before us is enormous, the earnest work performed by women is of an immense value. I will read to you an article from a paper that has been sent to me from Italy, which confirms these ideas. 'How can it be denied that man is what woman has made him in the family? How can it be expected that free men can be born from enslaved mothers? How can it be expected that men will love and use politics right if they who in-

spire them from the cradle are not allowed the freedom to which they are entitled? Women must study politics in order to train good citizens. Then from free women will be born free men. Have not men always kept women in the background? Turn to history and you will see that she has been used as a blind instrument. Remember that the antique edifice of superstition has been upheld by women, and if persisted in, keeping them at a distance instead of recognizing them as companions in practical life, men's efforts to destroy superstition and other evils will be fruitless; they will always be like a big ball between their feet, which will prevent their advancement and make them even fall. Men, have women as your equals in your civil and political life, and you will have on your side that force which has made, until now, your enemies powerful. Thinking men, elevate women to that position of responsibility and dignity which a progressive civilization demands. Do not oppose their enlightenment; grant them their political rights and then they will no longer remain the blind instruments of despotism and superstition, but will become a formidable power to push forward the car of progress and increase the moral forces which will establish equal laws and perfect justice. Men must understand that women are an active force, which makes the enemies of progress, who know it, and do all in their power to keep them, on their side, almost unconquerable.'"

"I am very glad," said Mme. Konrad, "that you read that article, especially as it comes from a country that is considered as being one of the most backward ones. We are taking a close observation of everything that is going on in this country, and will continue our work, and we hope that you and Ernestine will clearly understand each other, and that you will redouble your force as the head of the Reconstructive Movement by having her as your helpmate."

"You are perfectly right," said Olga, "and I feel positive that they are adapted to one another, and you will have a perfect wife, my good brother."

"I am fully aware of all the good qualities Miss Palmey possesses, and I appreciate your good opinions, and we will patiently wait and see what the future has in store for us. I am invited to visit a number of places and I hope to get through before the recetpion takes place; I may not have time to come and see you, but you will receive all the news."

CHAPTER XVII.

At the anxiously expected day Olga received Ernestine's letter, informing her, and describing the scene of luxury her parents had displayed in honor of the Russian nobleman. "You certainly have seen, and I assure you it was not exaggerated, the description given by the press," she wrote. "I am very sorry that my mother is so completely wrapped up in these useless exhibitions, but I hope a day will come when she will discover that to become a slave of pride, one becomes deprived of everything that makes this life what its Maker intended it should be. I was very glad to see your brother. No one knows that we are acquainted, and my mother is extremely pleased that we acted so friendly toward each other, and she will do her best to give us opportunities to become better acquainted, as she is afraid that some other wealthy young lady may win his attention. I am very anxious to see the day when I can enter the field of reform, when my life will be filled with useful work instead of idleness. I hope and pray that my parents will realize that self-abnegation, which opens our inner vision and sweeps the destroying forces of pride, envy and worldly fame from the human heart, helps us to reap the joys and comforts which the world knows nothing of. Yesterday I entered the library, where father and mother were carrying on a lively conversation. Father asked mother to read an article in a paper he had never seen before, and which some one had sent to him through the mail. Mother protested bitterly, 'those kind of papers,' she said, 'are intended to bring disturbance; are we not surrounded with every comfort? Why shall we accept the silly ideas presented by these so-called reformers?' Harshly she took the paper and threw it into the waste basket, then turning to me, she said: 'Your father and I have arranged for an excursion and we have invited the noble gentleman, and we want you to appear as pleasant and attractive as possible; we are anxious to have this matter settled, for there are about a dozen other wealthy families who are using every means to secure him, but thus far he shows no where as much interest as he does toward

you.' I turned my gaze toward my father, but he kept silent and looked at the floor. 'You came to look for some books? Come, father, we will not disturb her,' and father arose and followed mother. I waited a while and then picked up the paper which mother had thrown into the basket, and cautiously I placed it in the book I had selected and then retired to my room. I read the heading and noticed it was written by Victor Hugo and was entitled 'The Reformer's Task.' Knowing that you and Mme. Konrad are great admirers of that good man, and the paper being torn and wrinkled, I copied it." Olga began to read it: "'What an aim—to construct people! Ah, the people! In the foreground, everywhere, in the full light, amidst sound of trumpets, are the powerful men, followed by the gilded men. The reformer does not see them, or, if he does, he disdains them. He lifts his eyes and looks at God; then he drops his eyes and looks at the people. There, in the depths of shadow, almost invisible on account of its submersion in darkness, is that fatal crowd, that vast and mournful heap of suffering humanity, that venerable populace of the tethered and of the ignorant—a chaos of souls. From time to time there passes over the surface, like squalls over the water, catastrophes, wars, pestilence, famine. Then comes a tremor of but brief duration, the depths of sorrow being calm, like the depths of the sea. These burdened ones are silent; they know nothing, they can do nothing, they think nothing, they simply endure. This whole mass creeps and expires, not having even the power to love—perhaps unknown to them. From the inarticulate murmur of those wretched breaths mingled together, proceeds an indescribable, confused voice, a mysterious fog of expressions succeeding syllable by syllable in the darkness, uttering the wonderful words: 'Future, Humanity, Liberty, Equality, Fraternity, Progress!' The reformer listens, and hears, he looks, and he sees, he bends lower and lower, and he weeps; and then growing with a strange growth, he stands erect, terrible and tender, above all those wretched ones—those of high place, as well as those of low—with flaming eyes, and with a loud voice, Isaiah like, he demands a reckoning, and he says: 'Here is the effect, and here is the cause! Enlightenment is the remedy!' He is like a great vase full of humanity, shaken by the hand within the cloud, from which will fall to earth great drops—fire for the oppressors, dew for the

oppressed. Ah! you deem that an evil? Well, for our part, we approve it. It seems to me that someone should speak when all are suffering. The ignorant ones who enjoy, and the ignorant ones who suffer, have the same need of instruction. The law of fraternity is derived from the law of labor. The practice of killing has had its day; the hour has come for loving one another. That it may be so, oh, Reformer! make a sacrifice for the masses! Sacrifice for that unfortunate, disinherited, vanquished, repudiated throng called the masses! Sacrifice for them, if it must be, and when it must, by thy rest, thy fortune, thy life! The masses are the human race in misery. The masses are the mournful beginning of the people. The masses are the great victims of darkness. Sacrifice for them! Let thyself be hunted, be exiled, like Voltaire to Ferney, like D'Aubigne to Genoa, like Dante to Verona, like Juvenal to Syene, like Tacitus to Methymna, like Aeschylus to Gela, like John to Patmos, like Elijah to Horeb, like Isaiah to Eziongeber! Sacrifice thyself like Latimer and Ridley to the stake, like Warren to Bunker Hill, like Garrison to a Boston mob, like John Brown to the scaffold in Virginia, like Jesus of Nazereth to the Calvary! Sacrifice thyself, my brother reformer, to the masses; sacrifice for them thy gold, thy blood, which is more than gold, and thy thought, which is more than thy blood, and thy love, which is more than thy thought; sacrifice for them everything except justice. Receive their complaints, listen to them touching their faults, and touching the faults of others; hear their confession and their accusation. Give them thy ear, thy hand, thy arm, thy heart. Do everything for them except evil. Alas! They suffer so much, and they know so little. Correct them, warn them, guide them, train them. Put them in the school of honesty. Make them spell the truth, show them the alphabet of reason, teach them to read virtue, probity, generosity, mercy. Hold the book wide open. Be there attentive, vigilant, kind, faithful, humble. Light up the brain, influence the mind, extinguish selfishness, and thyself give the example. The poor are privation, be thou abnegation. Teach! mediate, they need thee; thou are their great thirst. To learn is the first step; to live is but the second. Doest thou hear? Be ever in the form of light, for it is beautiful on this somber earth during this dark life; it is beautiful that Progress should have courage as a leader, that intelligence should have honor as a sovereign,

that conscience should have duty as a ruler, that civilization should have liberty as a queen, and that humanity should have 'The Christ' within, then there is hope of glory and righteousness filling the earth. To work for the people—this is the great and urgent need. To construct the people, according to the laws of progress; to construct them by means of light—this is the task that confronts us in the twentieth century.'"

"Oh, I must take this immediately to our good friend," and quickly running up stairs, Olga knocked at the door, and hardly waiting for an answer she found herself in the presence of Mme. Konrad, and looking so happy, she said: "I think the time has come for us to push matters to a climax. I see you are busy, Madame, but I know you will be glad to hear the news from Ernestine. It has done her, and has done me, a great deal of good; in fact, I feel that I would neglect my duty if I did not use all my influence to induce my brother not to postpone the marriage. The tasks which confront us are plainly explained in this article, and the sooner we combine our forces the reform will go steadily on. So I will write to my brother and send him this article, and I think something will result from it."

Not very long afterwards Mme. Konrad called Olga, and smilingly said: "It is my turn to inform you of the happy news that your brother and Ernestine are engaged to be married. We shall see them, one of these days. The news has caused a great sensation, I was informed by one of our members——" A loud rap was heard at the door, and Olga had hardly said come in when the young lady appeared, saying cheerfully, as she handed Olga a letter, "Some good news!" and quickly retired. As fast as possible Olga opened the letter and read: "My Dearly Beloved Friend: I suppose you have alread heard that your good brother and I are engaged to be married. We are very anxious to see you and Mme. Konrad and consult together as to what to do concerning that great event. Please let me know when it will be convenient for you. Adieu. E."

"I would be in favor," said Mme. Konrad, "that all our advanced workers, whom we can notify, could be given the chance to see the good young couple. We will secure a large hall and arrange for a pleasant and private meeting, and when you write to Ernestine, please explain everything to her, that we shall have

a large gathering, and that we expect to hear many good thoughts and ideas expressed by the young couple."

"I will," said Olga, "and I suppose it will take about two days before everything will be ready, don't you think?"

"Yes, I do, for there is a large number of members to be notified, and we want to arrange everything so as to have a delightful meeting, and conduct it as quietly as possible."

As the time arrived for the large gathering, Ivanohe and Ernestine were the first ones to appear, and their presence seemed to radiate the purest love, and everyone that entered the hall and was introduced expressed the great and sincere happiness enjoyed on such an unlooked-for occasion. The young couple were delightfully surprised as they saw the large assembly of the Brotherhood, and the time could not have been spent more pleasantly if they had been real brothers and sisters. "Before we part," said Mme. Konrad, "we will ask Mr. Ivanohe and his bride to kindly address this large gathering." A great applause arose and Mr. Ivanohe was escorted to the platform. He asked permission to read a paper that someone had sent him, as a caution to be careful what he did. I was also notified that what the paper contained had been printed some time ago, when something similar took place, which is, "The daughter of an American millionaire was married to a titled European," and the individual who sent it to me thought it was well adapted for my own case. Listen to the title: 'American Snobbery.' 'As a matter of sober truth,' it says, 'it is nobody's business who marries Miss. E., or if she does not marry at all. And yet, the American nation is compelled to know all about it. We are surfeited with every minute detail of the 'preparations.' We are informed of every trivial detail. Presently the bride's garments will be described, and two continents are open-mouthed, gaping, eye-protruding, in admiring wonderment of the most ordinary event in life. Even the judicious are stirred to mutiny. If they are Americans, they cry out against the servility, the lick-spittle, toad-eating attitude of their countrymen making obeisance at the feet of this daughter of the dollar and this ass of aristocracy. Lower the scale a few degrees, make Miss E. an honest, hard-working servant in the kitchen of a respectable family, present us this Russian nobleman in the condition of many a better man driving a horse car, or serving the hungry public in a restaurant. They are

human beings in their spheres, as they are in the 'exalted' position they claim to occupy, but the marriage of ordinary Miss E. and plain Mr. I. would not produce a ripple on the surface of the social swim. The difference does not lie in the humanity of the people before whom we are posturing, but in the act that they are people of 'consequence' and 'position.' The one is an heiress of millions robbed from the people by a conscienceless individual, the other is 'descended' from a feudal banditti, who enslaved their peasantry and impoverished them, until grass was their food and revenge their religion. Miss E.'s parents are paying a big price for a title. This simple statement of the condition does not absolve the American people, or that portion of them, at least, who are playing such fantastic tricks before high heaven! Our fierce democracy is the laughing stock of the world, and no welkin-splitting guffaw is louder than that which emanates from the throats of the 'European nobility.' It is a laugh rancorous as the grinding of files, and it is accentuated by a sneer that rips the lips of the 'aristocracy' from the Ganges to the Thames. Oh, my countrymen and my countrywomen, you 'real sovereigns,' bearing aloft the aegis of the grandest republic the world has ever seen, why are you so abashed in the presence of these false gods? Why do you grovel and crawl and cringe in the presence of this gilded mammon and this tinsled Lazarus of nobility? As Americans we have a right to protest against this insult to American manhood and American womanhood, and, as Americans, we set the seal of honest condemnation and denial on the assertion that Americanism by all who bow down and worship at this shrine of jesters, fools and parasites!' My dear friends, I know every one of you agree with me, that not a single sentence is exaggerated in this paper, and many of the different reform movements who do not know Miss Palmey and myself, have been circulating in their papers articles of this kind. We do not blame them; on the contrary, they are right. The announcement of our engagement has caused a great sensation, which will increase, as the press is well paid for advertising the coming event. Miss Palmey and I will not represent the class distinction that has always caused unhappiness in the world, class distinctions which cause blindness and prejudice and make the blind unable to see how to create a higher social order and a truly nobler humanity. Our movement, as you all know, has an enormous task to perform

for the great and useful human masses are constantly deceived concerning their real happiness. The church preaches again and again that man was not made for this world alone; that real happiness can never be attained on earth; that it is in store for humanity in the next world. Is it right, brothers and sisters, to impress these false doctrines upon the useful classes and thus keep them in subjection? Why does it not denounce the tyrants, who control the means of information—the press—and we are told, often the pulpit! The preacher tries to make the people believe that real happiness can never be attained on earth. What a great mistake! We must teach the people until they fully understand it, that real happiness can be attained on this beautiful earth, if we understand our 'true self' and live the right life. I will reepat a little poem, not by a preacher but by a twentieth century woman:

Do you wish the world were better?
Let me tell you what to do:
Set a watch upon your actions;
Keep them always straight and true.
Rid you mind of selfish motives,
Let your thoughts be clean and high—
You can make a real Eden
Of the sphere you occupy.

—ELLA WHEELER WILCOX.

"If we rid our minds of selfish motives, do you think the present system, which creates and upholds an upper crust of society as vicious as the other extreme, the lower crust, could continue to exist?"

"No! No!" exclaimed the audience.

"In one of the states the governor ventures the prediction that 'unless in the future—in the near future—greater harmony is restored between labor and capital, the country will be plunged into a civil war more disastrous than any previously recorded in history.' But does he suggest any peaceable remedy? My dear friends, when we hear such a dreadful prediction in this country, whose sacred duty it is to lead the less favored ones in the world, I feel as if the Reconstructive Movement will have to spread the saving seeds, work day and

night, work unceasingly, until this wrong system is completely removed, and in its place appears the new, the elevating and glorious co-operative system!" Great applause. "Why, oh, why is it that the people do not become aware that they are treading on dangerous ground, and they are already threatened that the rotten foundation must sink? the Reconstructive powerful remedy must appear as convincing as possible before the people's minds, that all, all the people will have equal opportunities to develop mind and body to the fullest extent; and under that blessed system there will be no longer any distinction by creating rich and poor, but all will be equal, and that certainly means the triumph of morality and the disappearance of social corruption, capital corruption, which has always bled the useful toilers. The evils of life will vanish, when there will be pleasant and useful employment for all, without overwork, anxiety, oppression, and there will no longer be millions of wage-earning children, and millions of adults unemployed for the purpose of enriching the exploiting few, who so madly reverse the social orders. No one will complain in this world, for cities and villages will be rebuilt on more sanitary and beautiful plans, and provided with all modern comforts, and so, everybody will have a good home, and everybody will be free to choose the occupation for which he is naturally fitted, and everybody will have the necessary time for study and useful recreation. And then, there will be no more hungry beings and no more bloodshed when we have the just economic system. Real happiness will be attained on God's earth when the big factories and shops will be completely transformed. The people must be taught that they will not be, as one great reform paper says, in the smoky and cheerless place of drudgery where they are today. They will be equipped with electrical appliances, built on a beautiful plan and kept as clean as the art galleries and museums are today. Work in these factories will be an inspiration and pleasure. Think, my friends, that instead of being repulsive like the capitalist factories, they will be very attractive. And think how quick the great woman's problem will be solved, for they will no longer be compelled to sell themselves for money, or for protection, to men, and no woman will have any other reason for marrying but love, and the children, the dear children will be given every opportunity for the best education and to develop health and strength. Criminals and all other abnormal individuals

will be treated as morally diseased people. There will be no prisons, no solitary confinement and judicial murders. Happiness, then, will not be in store for humanity, as the preachers say, 'in the next world,' but as the true reformers know, in this land. That we shall all be workers, all brothers, not only in the United States, but all the workers in all other countries will be our brothers. Wars will thus become impossible, and peace and happiness will reign on earth!" A great and long applause followed, and when order was restored, Mme. Konrad arose and said:

"Ladies and gentlemen, we will now listen to another good speaker, Miss Palmey."

As she was escorted to and stood on the platform, she was enthusiastically and heartily greeted. In her usual earnest way, she began:

"Good Friends and Co-workers: It is immensely gratifying to us all, no doubt, to be present at such a large gathering of active workers in the Reconstructive Movement. In my mind, as well as in yours, are such contrasting pictures, which so plainly show that the sorrow in the present condition of society is so deep, cold and oppressive, that our efforts for its amelioration are compelled to increase. The terrible mistakes of indulging in pride, envy and hypocrisy, which fills the world with discord and destruction, must be uncovered until the people comprehend that those passions are the creators of hell in this, as well as in the other existence, and in order to gain the kingdom of heaven, or Divine harmony, they must be overcome, not in a half, but in a radical way. Tell me, my friends, would those contrasting pictures afflict the human mind, would they exist, or appear at all, if every living individual would live the righteous life? And can any humanitarian pretend that under the present condition of society the righteous life can exist?"

"No! No! Impossible!" exclaimed the audience.

"Can the true sense of justice permit us to assert that the so-called twentieth century high civilization is applied to the good of all the human family? Certainly not! And why is it that religious teachers are so far behind the times? You heard that one of them said, 'I would give the ballot only to persons who have character and intelligence enough to make good citizens.' And one of our good reform movement workers said, 'Would it not be more

in harmony with the reverend gentleman's cloth to contend bravely for conditions that would enable all to be intelligent citizens?' Have those teachers not learned yet that great wealth is a curse to the possessor, and that, as a rule, the sons of the wealthy are dissipated, depraved and entirely useless? That private wealth cannot create real happiness? Can they not see that the dominance of class interests is what prevents the moral and intellectual elevation of humanity? And can they not understand why, no nation can remain great while poverty and want pervades the masses and luxury is the idol of the few? This gigantic problem that confronts the masses must be solved by them, for they are the real power, and they will succeed when they listen to what a poet said:

'Yes, harness every river above the cataract's brink,
And then, unharness man.
To earth's reservoirs of fire let your giant shaftings sink,
And scourge your drudging thunder-bolts—and give man time to think.
Throw your bridles on the rivers, curb them at the cataract's brink—
And then, unharness man.'

"Those few sentences contain a great significance. The human masses are harnessed, and they cannot think; as they cannot think they are surrounded with fear. Why? Because fear is the result of ignorance. Here is an article from a daily paper, which describes two dreadfully contrasting pictures. It is entitled 'Shame! Shame!' but no remedy is suggested. One picture is, 'Concerning railroad contract labor, unprecedented in the annals even of pauperism. Corporations, calling themselves Christian, traffic in human lives, oppress the poor, literally build their tracks upon the skeletons of a downtrodden race. That thus far no champion of humanity has come forward to strike a body blow at the corporation vampires, simply shows that no one has felt strong enough to assault these gigantic interests.' My dear friends, is it possible that the daily press does not know that a powerful Reconstructive Movement exists? Do they not make a great mistake by ignoring it, and thereby encourage the Destructive Movement? The other picture represents the

splendid trains, the surroundings of which are princely, and only the wealthy tourists can enjoy the trips. The cars, it says, are finished in mahogany and rosewood; hung with costly draperies, decorated with stained glass, crystal mirrors, equipped with silver plated lavatories, bath service, barber shop, lounging apartments, in brief, all the appointments of a palace on wheels. The dining service is exquisite. The tables are set with silver plate, and there are even private drawing rooms in which every comfort, convenience and luxury of living is provided. The press says: 'Little do the people dream of the awful truth, that the railroad ties are watered with the blood of toiler victims of contract labor! It is a jealously guarded secret, a secret that this paper has exposed, and to the shame of all concerned, has flung naked before an astonished world.' The press exposes the dastardly crimes against humanity committed by railroad corporations, but does it mention a single word concerning the other toilers? Who has constructed the cars in mahogany and rosewood? Who have produced the costly draperies, crystal mirrors, silver plates, and all the luxuries of a palace on wheels? The laboring class! And are they given a chance to enter the princely surroundings that they create, and how often they are compelled to a bloody conflict and strive to death for their limited rights? Is it possible, under such conditions, to reach a high civilization? The men and women who have joined this reform movement fully agree with the statement made by W. Dean Howells, that 'Till a man is independent, he is not free. The man who is in danger of want is not a free man, and the country which does not guard him against the danger, or does not insure him the means of livelihood is not a free country, though it may be the freest country that is. Liberty and poverty are incompatible, and if poverty continues, liberty is impossible. The unrest, which is called labor trouble is nothing more nor less than an endeavor for the liberty of which the working class is dispossessed. The worthy classes to whom the world is indebted for all its comforts and embellishments, and when the new system shall be established, there will be a wonderful development of human skill. The workingman's chances will not be curtailed; he will not be held down as he has always been. At present we can count the men who have risen, and shown the world their talents, only by small numbers, but one encouraging feature is this, they arose from the working, and not from the

idle classes. Edgar Allen Poe was the son of strolling players; Benjamin Franklin was the son of a tallow chandler; George Peabody was a grocery boy; John Adams was the son of a poor farmer; Gifford, editor of the Quarterly Review, was a common sailor; Ben Johnson was a bricklayer; Andrew Jackson was the son of an Irish workingman; Andrew Johnson was a tailor; Garfield was a boy of all work; Grant was a tanner; Lincoln a keel boatman and common farm hand. Poor humanity has rarely been given the chance to select the professions or trades best suited to their natural capacities and inclinations. It is worse than folly to turn the minds of the people into channels which they are unfit to master, it means their ruin and a great loss to the world. Poverty must be abolished, it is one of the great obstacles of the world's progress. Labor must be honored, and every healthy man and woman must be willing to do their share, then will the criminal element disappear, and life will be demonstrated in a glorious aspect. When poverty is destroyed, pride and hatred, greed and oppression, ignorance and haughtiness, with all the other evils, will disappear from the world, and a new conception of life will encourage everyone to live the highest moral life, and the system proposed by the Reconstructive movement will furnish everything needed to bring universal peace, harmony and energetic efforts toward obtaining more perfection, because, through it every high faculty will be constantly fed and renewed by constantly performing noble deeds, and then the clear view of life will help mankind to put on immortality, for 'where our treasure is, there will our hearts be.' From the bottom of my soul I am grateful for having been given the opportunity to come in contact with so many heroes and heroines, and I thank you for your patience and kind attention." With a graceful bow she took her seat, and from every part of the hall sounded the heartiest applause. Pretty soon Mme. Konrad arose and said:

"Ladies and Gentlemen: This gathering of so many noble-hearted members has in a great measure renewed our courage and our sense of duty. If time did but permit we would ask everyone to give a full expression of their views, for we all know that the task is sublime and it will make life worth living. We shall no longer hover around the borderland, considering this precious life as only a weary pilgrimage, but will fully realize that the power is given humanity to bring the Kingdom of Heaven on earth; and

its precious effects will be felt in everyone's daily life. The young couple intend to do something that will stir up the people and set them to thinking, but they have not fully decided what it shall be. They feel sorry that they are compelled to use extreme measures, but they hope it will result in a great blessing to all. When the plan shall be fully arranged everyone will be notified, and we know everyone will be ready, as the work will be carried on with greater zeal and enthusiasm. The harvest will be great, and we know the laborers shall not be wanting. We will now adjourn, close this pleasant meting and extend to all sincere thanks."

CHAPTER XVIII.

We will now take the kind reader back to Chapter 1, where the description of the great event took place. The shock was so heavy that the whole assembly remained for some time petrified. The next day the public was startled by the strange news. The press presented the matter in such a style that the upper classes were horrified. For several weeks it kept the public in a most anxious suspense. Finally an explanation appeared, coming directly from the Russian nobleman, in which he said: "He and his wife both regretted that the present social conditions had compelled them to act as they had, and had they not done it, and followed the wrong social rules, they would have been guilty of supporting a state of affairs which threatens to destroy the freedom which this nation, by great sacrifices, had obtained. That European titles and American wealth form a combination that will result in renewing tyranny and despotism. As members of the Reconstructive Movement, it is our duty to stand firmly on the right side. The un-American acts are being adopted by the modern aristocracy, and are hollow mockeries, and to arouse the people they must have facts, strong facts, which will prove to them that oppressors and oppressed can no longer, then, spoil the beautiful sight of God's earth! Armed with the strongest and most sincere desire to do our share of the work and accomplish the greatest good within our reach, my wife and I have left forever what is considered by the unthinking world—the upper class—situation, and we are ready to march in straight line with the advancing forces, which are more powerful in this land than in any other in the world. My wife, the daughter of a multi-millionaire, who has for some years kept a close observation, realizing more and more the great wrongs, she has resolved to enter the field of reform, and she feels that every good and thinking woman in this land who knows the great need of reform, that not a single one will stand back, for, looking at it from the right point, the appeal to their conscience and soul will be so strong that it will be impossible for them to resist it, and

then how soon will justice assume its natural position, how soon will blind faith, selfishness and ignorance disappear, for then will the world blaze with the light of intelligence, which will rule out of nature every plague, by cultivating the life-giving, pure brotherly love, honesty and goodness."

The open statement, coming directly from the Russian nobleman, caused a new sensation. Bitter criticism appeared in the daily press, while the reform papers praised and upheld what they considered the most impressive lesson of the day. The young couple received invitations from many organizations. Everybody seemed anxious to see them and hear them express the new ideas. Complimentary notes were sent them from distant places. The Brotherhood of Destruction sent two of their most prominent members to interview them, and personally express their approbation, and invite them to attend one of their special meetings, which would be arranged to their honor, and they cheerfully retired when their invitation was accepted. When the extraordinary young people appeared before the assembly of the Destructive Movement, the greetings were so enthusiastic and courteous that the young wife was greatly surprised. The presiding officer introduced them in the formal way, and his remarks showed the sincerity of his admiration of the wonderful act they had performed, which overwhelmingly demonstrated it as an act above, higher above, what the world considers the most distinctive feature of society. A most remarkable act performed by a titled nobleman and a millionaire's daughter, which showed their plain understanding of what the human race needs in order to awaken them from their heavy moral slumber. The sordid and deceitful state of affairs surrounding the world, he said, must be swept entirely away, or history will repeat itself, arrogance and oppression will again appear under a different form, but its effects as appalling, or more so, than in the past. The curse of creating vested rights has always kept the world in sorrow, but it will increase, as it never had a chance before, for it will take advantage of all the modern and stupendous discoveries; it will renew, if not stopped, all the evils of the past by spreading the worship of mammon. The destroying feature of capital has been nourished for years by constantly keeping before the public mind the false ideas of the self-made man, who, no matter by what means, accumulated piles of capital, and the minds of the people were

turned to the treasure that is destroyed by moth and rust. Is it right that labor shall be at the mercy of that treasure? Is it right that the great masses of toilers shall depend for their daily existence upon the few, whose only scope in life is to pile it up? Therefore, I must repeat, again and again, that no true man or woman can disapprove the plans adopted by this Brotherhood. This Brotherhood owes most of its growth to the care with which it secures the co-operation of every individual who is endowed by nature with gifts which are utilized to bring to light what is best adapted to stir up the hearts of the people. We have secured orators who can charge their speeches with such strong and life vibrations that wherever they are heard their listeners are compelled to think, take hold of the new ideas, and fall in line with the fighters against the existing wrongs. We have secured the co-operation of persons who can represent on canvas scenes, that if once seen, can never be forgotten. Literature, we know, is a great eye-opener and guide, but art represents the facts in such vivid forms, that it is not surprising if so many persons are inspired at the sight of paintings which awaken thoughts and ideas that appeal to the noblest sentiments of mankind. I need proceed no further, for we know that the Reconstructive Movement obtains, as we do, the powerful help from the persons who, under this competitive system would never have the opportunity to demonstrate their precious gifts. We have sent for one of our workers, and I hope he will be here in time to display some of his interesting scenes." He took his seat and the orchestra began, first in sweet and plaintive notes, and gradually it turned into notes of strong appeal, a peculiar but very affecting combination. Suddenly the lights were put out and a beautiful scene appeared, representing a regal splendor, a cardinal, acting as consecrator, two arch bishops, a dozen bishops, many priests and scores of acolytes assisting in the ceremonies and celebration of mass. A large audience, awed by the solemnity and majesty of the ceremonies, witnessed the consecration of a bishop, who was escorted by two bishops to the foot of the main altar. The bishop-elect appeared robed in a long, purple cassock, and on his head was the purple beretta. The vestments of the bishop, including the gold-plated and jeweled crozier, which were of the finest silk and linen, edged with pearls and bedecked with amethysts and diamonds worth about ten thous-

and dollars, were exhibited. That scene of regal splendor slowly disappeared and in its place was seen a plain valley, inspiring peace and sweet calm. At the sight of the unpretentious master the people around him showed no awe, for there was no pomp nor regal splendor to appeal to the external senses. The master's words reached the inner and good qualities of his hearers, for they meant love and compassion. He healed the sick; his living words touched the hearts and converted the wrong-doers. He knew that ceremonies were not only useless, but harmful, for, instead of helping the people to concentrate their thoughts on the Eternal Being, their minds were dissipated by such glaring worldly exhibitions. This scene also disappeared, and after a short prelude of music the hall was lighted again. The president said: "Before we adjourn we shall ask our guests to do us the favor to visit our headquarters, where they will be shown our most important work." A number of persons in the hall arose to their feet and said: "Mr. President, will you please ask the lady to kindly express her views?" The president, turning toward the lady, said: "Yes, Madame, we know that you will grant us the favor, and although our views may differ, we shall listen to you with great pleasure." The lady advanced to the front of the platform, gracefully addressed the president, then turning to the audience, began:

"Ladies and Gentlemen: While listening and observing everything this evening, my mind has been in a constant stir. One idea calls up another, and the realm of thought into which we are carried in discussing the questions that are to be solved, seems limitless. We are reminded that Americans and American advancement are the wonder of the world. While other nations have lagged in the rear, have hung with fanaticism to the old methods, Americans have been compelled to work out their own salvation. Now, please tell me, thus far, what does this salvation mean? Is it really true that in America, and among Americans, the spirit strives for what is termed progress? Steam, electricity and labor-saving machinery being utilized, would it not be natural that these marvelous labor-saving inventions should lighten the work and greatly, entirely improve the condition of the toilers; that the enormous modern power of producing wealth should make poverty disappear forever? Does not this marvelous labor-saving invention, carried on under this destroying competitive system, cause a greater industrial de-

pression, compelling to involuntary idleness and want, the laboring masses? Is this salvation, when the struggle for existence becomes sharper and capital runs in search of higher interest? Is it true that under the present system Americans work out their own salvation, when they are mercilessly dividing the human family? My soul felt deeply oppressed when I received the information that in the factories where labor-saving machinery is used little children are put to work; that amid the greatest accumulations of wealth men die of starvation, and puny infants suckle dry breasts, while the greed for gain, the worship of wealth, is on the increase, and finally this land, unless a change for the better comes, will be destroyed! Can it be otherwise, if the ambitious individuals claim lordship over men, and ther claims are made more sacred than the God-given rights of men? When this criminal reasoning effaces the Divine Laws, and the blind subjects consider it their duty to murder, plunder and commit every crime? The more one investigates, the clearer can be perceived the alarming conditions, and, to a great extent, it is discouraging if we consider that there are so many people who see all the evils and yet make not the least effort to prevent them. Why cannot every true man and woman understand how important it is for everyone to stand fearless and firm on the side of the true reform? These are days of rumors of war, and of war preparation, say many of those who see the wrongs but suggest no remedies. Ponderous battleships, cruisers and torpedo boats are being built to fight on the seas, and great and terrible cannon, machine guns and rapid-fire guns are being forged for both sea and land, and armies are being increased, and the call grows louder for more marines to man the fighting ships, thus attempting the impossible task of harmonizing the murderous butcheries and destruction of war with the gentle and tender love of the Prince of Peace! Why are men so absorbed in the amassing of millions, and not satisfied, they want to possess billions, which is the goal for which they are feverishly struggling? This struggle in the field of commercialism cannot help but create animosities that, so many say, will have to be settled on the bloody field of battle if the blind idolaters of wealth turn this beautiful world into an arena of conflicting forces. Ladies and gentlemen, you express, I know, a strong desire to draw into your line the Reconstructive Movement, but allow me to tell you that we feel convinced that

the time will come when only the best kind of movement, which can accomplish what the world needs, will exist. The basis of the Reconstructive Movement is brotherly, pure love; it recognizes the "Unity" of the whole human family. It recognizes the Divine Essence in every human being, and its aim is to assist every brother and sister to demonstrate the perfect, unchangeable Divine Spark which enables everyone to live the true life, and we know that the vital part is to construct the needful environments, then, we may be sure that the 'corruptible must put on incorruption.' Our movement is gathering and putting on record everything that happens and proves that it is not mistaken that the environments which elevate the physical, mental and spiritual conditions, are the most effective curative agencies demanded in the twentieth century. One of the latest that reached us is entitled: 'Reclaiming Depraved Humanity.' In the state prison of one of the states were four men, known as the 'demons.' The press stated that they were depraved specimens of humanity, from whom all the qualities which distinguish man from the beast seemed to have departed. In prison they were subjected to the severest treatment. A new man, who was a student of criminology, was given charge of the prison, and he concluded to try an experiment on his depraved guests, and their regeneration was told as follows: 'After a brief interview with the four, he gave secret directions to the guards who patrolled the corridor in which the 'demons'' cage was located, to increase the quantity of their food and to give them victuals of a better quality than they had tasted in many years. Keep on bettering the food from time to time,' the warden directed. 'Give them a little more and a little better food from week to week. Do it gradually, and don't let them know that they are going to receive any better treatment at our hands than ever. In a few weeks the demons began to show color. Red corpuscles entered their blood, and their hollow cheeks began to fill out. Their eyes lost the lustre of criminal insanity, and their weight increased. With the recurrence of health came a consciousness of strength and a desire to use human energy in normal channels, and instead of regarding their close and solitary confinement with indifference and stoicism, they began to tire of it, and all four asked that they be put to work. Since that time the quondam demons have been the most docile and tractible beings. Now,

my kind listeners, I do not doubt that if you consider well this matter, you must become convinced, as we are, that if depraved humanity can be reclaimed by bettering the physical food, think of the wonderful mental and spiritual improvement when the principles of the Reconstructive Movement shall establish the environments that will permanently feed with saving food the 'true ego also!" As the lady took her seat a tumultuous applause arose in every part of the hall. When the president arose he appeared much affected and stated that he must own that the ideas expressed by the lady were the clearest and best he had ever heard. After a while he said: "Ladies and Gentlemen: I have the pleasure to introduce to you Mr. A. B., a worker whom I know you will like to hear." As the sepaker advanced to the platform, and was pleasantly greeted, he began:

"Mr. President, Ladies and Gentlemen: When I consider the noble act performed by this good young couple, it is difficult for me to express in words the thoughts that arise within me. What this excellent young couple have undertaken, is what is needed in this country to enlighten and guide the restless spirit of the people. This age demands facts, not empty words. Facts that will demonstrate that the people shall be free from bondages that have enslaved them in the past and threaten to be renewed in this good land. Dear friends, are not your hearts filled with admiration, love and respect toward this young man and woman, who have subdued the relentless masters which rule and crush the world; the relentless masters called 'pride, selfishness and greed?'" He had hardly finished the sentence when every individual in the hall arose to their feet and cried, loudly, "Yes! Yes!" and the clapping of hands and enthusiastic demonstrations continued till the young couple arose and thanked them. "Emotions of this kind," continued the speaker, "produced by the realization of the good that has been accomplished, and the enormous amount of good that we can foresee in the future, are uplifting, and intensely penetrate into our souls! This great and unique country demands today more than ever, greater vigilance, for the immense concentration of capital overshadows the foundation of this great republic! And today, with stronger conviction than ever, we perceive the necessity of woman's co-operation in order to succeed in directing this nation in the right line of progress. Women, if they refuse to co-

operate, will be more guilty than men, because more than the men they are submitting to the absurd claims of the dark days. Claims of distinction in empty titles, and the whirl of fashions and frivolities of the idle class. There is a broader and higher culture within the reach of women today, and the development and increase of their energies, owing to the more responsible position they so ably fulfill, demands of them to overcome the shams and fashionable follies, and allow me," he said, turning to the young lady, "to point to you as the most remarkable example of the day, an example that will appeal to the noblest sentiments, latent so long in the souls of womankind." Again a thundering applause arose, and for some time the president did not succeed in establishing order. Among a number who had remained on their feet was a young man, who raised a piece of paper above his head and said: "Mr. President, here is an article written by a prominent French author, entitled 'The Modern World Uncivilized,' which plainly explains that there will be no civilization until the present system is changed, and I am sure everybody will be glad to hear it." "Please come forward," said the officer, "I know no one will object, as we all hold the author in high esteem." With a strong and sonorous voice the young man began: "We pride ourselves on our refinement, but we are not nearly reclaimed from barbarism. A hundred years hence our descendants will consider us and our institutions with the same contempt we vouchsafe to the people of the middle ages, or to the refractory Chinese of today. This is not a paradox. I am past juggling for an audience. Despite our self-satisfied bumptiousness, mankind is still piteously groping after real civilization, like a tangled mass of larvae, tumbling and crawling out of some dark, slimy cavern toward the light that will give them wings. Only a few men have forged ahead and stand in the full sunshine of truth. An undeniable increase in material comfort and equipment must be credited to the nineteenth century, but that alone does not constitute civilization. Better food, fast steamers, telephone and electric lights—all that is only the accessory part of human development, means to happiness, certainly, but not happiness. Has the telephone diminished the hunger of the hungry? Our brains are still befogged, our private and public life is still based upon vile, exasperating ignorance. Reason, now proclaimed by a hundred prophets in every country, has everywhere the greatest trouble to pene-

trate through the thick folds of insane prejudices that enwrap individuals and institutions. The evils we suffer from, and the evils each of us perpetrate, have no doubt been lessened in a measure, but it seems to me they have, for the most part, merely changed their aspects and their names. There were times—not so many generations ago—when in every country men and women were tortured by inquisitors, religious or not. Now most countries, we think, have grown beyond that. But are not the newspapers filled with revolting cases of children tortured by their parents, of wives who are long-suffering martyrs, of students who find cruel delight in bullying some poor, ill-gifted companion? And do you know what frightful things take place, I will not say in Turkey or Siberia, but in the penitentiaries and insane asylums of the most advanced nations? There were times, to be sure, when political and religious fanaticism fettered all development, sought to extinguish science, and burned the scientists at the stake. We are certainly past that stage. Yet today Tolstoy is excommunicated by the Greek church. I was, before him, and so were Catholics and Protestants—Darwin, Huxley, Renan, and most of the harbingers of tomorrow's truth. Why, I have it direct from eminent American professors, that in most of the universities of the United States they would not dare express their real convictions on religion, political or economic questions, because their resignations would surely be demanded at once. It is the same in England and Germany. And in France Jean Jaures, one of the geniuses of the age, was recently refused a chair in the College de France to lecture upon Socialism. Your own admirable Henry George, if I remember well, died a pauper, after having been jeered at his whole life long; and the lofty German apostle, Liebknecht, was an exile for years, hounded out of Germany, as Victor Hugo out of France. Yet, with what contempt we regard that historical council that compelled Galileo to kneel and say that the earth did not move. But, on the other hand, for such devastating forces of retrogradation as Bismarck, Chamberlain and General Mercier, the world seems at a loss to find adequate honors and adulations; even their most severe judges feel bound to temper their censure with admiring reserve. It is useless to delude ourselves. You may tinker all you please, there will be no true civilization until the present social system is modified. Have you not learned that there are, every day, thous-

ands—not hundreds, but thousands—of men and women who die of want, of cold, of disease, unattended, and that, too, frequently after these miserables have given twenty, thirty, fifty years of their labor to the making of all that we enjoy? Can you forget that children —little children as precious as yours—are this minute suffering famine and absorbing the germs of all vices? Can you forget that in every hospital, prison, factory, tenement, there are crimes that cry for vengeance to heaven? Ah! the sadness of it all! To think that throughout the length of the century just finished, great men have vainly cried these things, have pondered during long years of abnegation over these problems, and vainly pointed out the remedies. But they were mistrusted, misrepresented, and mocked by childish crowds, proud of their numbers. E. Z."

Having finished the reading, the young man quickly turned to the president and earnestly said:

"I believe, Mr. President, that everyone present is anxious to hear our honored guest express his views concerning this matter."

The audience heartily expressed their approval, and the officer politely asked Mr. Ivanohe to address the assembly. For a while he stood silent before the audience, and slowly turning toward the president, very impressively addressed him as follows:

"Mr. President: The real meaning of that article, 'The Modern World Uncivilized,' is, that the great problem, the master problem, 'How to live,' is yet unsolved! How, and when, will the race be able to understand the great motto, 'Man, know thyself'? It can, and will, only be able when it will entirely absorb the modern idea that 'Mentality,' true 'mentality' alone, is the power of mankind, and to study it, is to study all things, and is the only way to learn how to live right, for from that center flows forth everything that every human being is and does, either good or evil. And that subject, so vast anad momentous, demands a new motive power, which will propel and regulate and perfectly mould the public opinion. How can the modern world be civilized when the present system appeals not to the highest mental faculties, but to the lowest mental propensities? We know that in every part of the world are friends of the poor and oppressed. Here is an article written by one of these friends, who gave utterance to ideas that ought to be learned, and it certainly would help those who are misled by the low propensities to become free and save themselves and their

fellow beings. 'Inventions,' he said, 'have filled the world with competitors, not only of laborers, but of mechanics. Today the ordinary laborer is, for the most part, a peg in a wheel. He works with the tireless—he feeds the insatiable. When the monster stops the man is out of employment—out of bread. He has not saved anything. The machine that he fed was not feeding him, was not working for him—the invention was not for his benefit.' Can it be, under this competitive system, Mr. President and friends?"

"Certainly not!" cried everyone.

"The other day I heard a man read an article, and he kindly gave it to me, and with your permission I will read it. It may be nothing new to you, but it is worth reading it again and again. The writer says: 'It is almost impossible for thousands of good mechanics to get employment, and, in my judgment, the government ought to furnish work for the people. Recently a man was trying to sell a patent for cutting out clothes, and one of the machines could do the work of twenty tailors. Having succeeded in selling it to a great house in New York, over forty cutters were discharged. On every side,' he said, 'machines are invented and take the place of human labor. When the factory shuts down, the workers who inhabited it, and gave it life, as thoughts do the brain, go away, and it stands there like an empty skull. A few workers, from force of habit, gather about the closed doors and broken windows, and talk about distress, the price of food and the coming winter. They are convinced that they have not had their share of what their labor created. They feel certain that the machines inside were not their friends. They look at the mansion of the employer, and think of the places where they live. They have saved nothing—nothing but themselves. Their employer seems to have enough. Even when employers fail, when they become bankrupt, they are far better off than the laborers ever were. Their worst is better than the toilers' best. The capitalist comes forward with his specific. He tells the workingman that he must be economical! But, under the present system, economy would only lessen wages. Under the great law of supply and demand, every saving, frugal, self-denying workman is unconsciously doing what little he can to reduce the compensation of himself and his fellows. The slaves who did not wish to run away helped fasten chains on those who did. So the saving mechanic is a certificate that wages are high enough. Does the great

law demand that every worker live on the least possible amount of bread? Is it his fate to work one day that he may get enough food to be able to work another? Is that to be his only hope—that and death? Capital has always claimed, and still claims, the right to combine. Manufacturers meet and determine prices, even in spite of the great law of supply and demand. Have the laborers the same right to consult and combine? The rich meet in the bank, the club house or parlor. Workingmen, when they combine, gather in the street. All the organized forces of society are against them."

"Remove, destroy the system!" cried every member in the hall.

"Capital has the army and the navy, the legislature, the judicial and executive departments. When the rich combine, it is for the purpose of exchanging ideas. When the poor combine, it is a 'conspiracy.' If they act in concert, if they really do something, it is a 'mob.' If they defend thmeselves it is 'treason.' How is it that the rich control the departments of government? In this country the political power is equally divided among men. There are certainly more poor than there are rich. Why should the rich control? Why should not the laborers combine for the purpose of controlling the executive, the legislative and judicial departments? Will they ever find how powerful they are?"

"They certainly will!" exclaimed the audience.

"'How are we to settle the unequal contest between men and machines? Will the machines finally go into partnership with the laborers? Can these forces of nature be controlled for the benefit of her suffering children? Will extravagance keep pace with ingenuity? Will the workmen become intelligent enough and strong enough to be owners of the machines? Will these giants, these Titans, shorten or lengthen the hours of labor? Will they give leisure to the industrious, or will they make the rich richer and the poor poorer? Is man intelligent enough to be generous, to be just?' I will not repeat," said Mr. Ivanohe, "what the writer expressed comparing human beings to the animal and vegetable world. I do not believe he meant it, for he was too intelligent, and if he were living today he would certainly be one of our great reformers. 'In the days of slavery, the strong devoured the weak—actually ate their flesh—and in spite of all the laws that man has made, in spite of all advances in science, the strong, the cunning, the heartless, still live on the weak, the unfortunate and foolish.

True, they do not eat their flesh or drink their blood, but they live on their labor, on their denial, their weariness and want. The poor man who deforms himself by toil, who labors for wife and child through all his anxious, barren, wasted life, who goes to the grave without ever having had one luxury, has been the food of others. He has been devoured by his fellow men. The poor woman, living in the bare and lonely room, cheerless and fireless, sewing night and day to keep starvation from a child, is slowly being devoured by her fellow men. When I take into consideration the agony of civilized life, the failures, the poverty, the anxiety, the tears, the withered hopes, the bitter realities, the hunger, the crime, the humiliation, the shame, I am almost forced to say that cannibalism, after all, is the most merciful form in which man has ever lived upon his fellow man. It is impossible for a man with a good heart to be satisfied with this world as it is now. No man can truly enjoy even what he earns—what he knows to be his own—knowing that millions of his fellow men are in misery and want. When we think of the famished, we feel it is almost heartless to eat. To meet the ragged and shivering makes one almost ashamed to be well dressed and warm—one feels as though his heart was as cold as their bodies. In the world filled with millions and millions of acres of land waiting to be tilled, and where one man can raise the food for hundreds, millions are on the edge of famine. Who can comprehend the stupidity at the bottom of this truth? Is there to be no change? Are the 'law of supply,' invention and science, monopoly and competition, capital and legislation, always to be the enemies of those who toil? Will the workers always be ignorant enough and stupid enough to give their earnings for the useless? Will they support millions of soldiers to kill the sons of other workingmen? Will they always build temples for ghosts and phantoms, and live in huts and dens for themselves? Will the lips unstained by lies forever kiss the robed imposter's hand? Will they understand that beggars cannot be generous, and that every healthy man must have the right to earn the right to live? Will they finally say that the man who has had equal privileges with others, has no right to complain, or will they follow the example that has been set by their oppressors? Will they learn that force, to succeed, must have thought behind it, and that thought must rest upon the corner stone of justice?' Mr. President, I must repeat again, that if that

gentleman were alive today, having perceived and described the present social condition so clearly, that he could not resist the prompting of his conscience to become a strong co-worker in the Reconstructive Movement. The centralization of money power has certainly never been realized before in the history of the world, and what does it mean? It means unmercifully fleecing the people right and left. And by such profuse bleeding, is it any wonder that the people are crippled?"

"Mr. Speaker," cried aloud one of the members, "if that gentleman were alive today—if Mr. Ingersoll were alive today, I feel positive he would join no other but the Destructive Movement. Would it not be better for every living being if the present system were completely destroyed?"

"No, sir," calmly answered Mr. Ivanohe, "not violently destroyed, but wisely reconstructed, and unless we apply this saving principle, all the elements will become unloosed, and the human strifes will reach a point that can only be compared to the destructive and tremendous uproar of nature. And, thank heaven, in the twentieth century appears a power to support the great reform movement which no destroying army can be compared to, and this power is the twentieth century true reform women. It may not be new to you to hear what Mrs. F. W., president of the N. W. Ch. T. U., declared in an address before a national convention in behalf of this great reform. It is as follows: 'Look about you; the products of labor are on every hand; you could not maintain for a moment a well ordered life without them; every object in your room has in it, for discerning eyes, the mark of ingenuous tools, and the pressure of labor's hands. But is it not the cruelest injustice for the wealthy, whose lives are surrounded and embellished by labor's work, to have a superabundance of the money which represents the aggregate of labor in any country, while the laborer himself is kept so steadily at work that he has no time to acquire the education and refinements of life? The reason why I am a reformer comes in just here. I would take, not by force, but by the slow process of lawful acquisition through better legislation, as the outcome of a wiser ballot in the hands of men and women, the entire plant that we call civilization, all that has been achieved on this continent in the four hundred years since Columbus wended his way hither, and make it the common property of all the people, requiring all to

work enough with their hands to give them the finest physical development, but not to become burdensome in any case, and permitting all to share alike the advantages of education and refinement. I believe this to be so perfectly practicable, indeed, that any other method is simply a relic of barbarism. I believe that competition is doomed. The trusts, whose single object is to abolish competition, have proved that we are better without than with it, and the moment that a corporation controls the supply of any product, they combine. What this great reform desires is, that the corporation of humanity should control all productions. Beloved comrades, this is the frictionless way. It is the higher way; it eliminates the motives for a selfish life; it enacts into our every day living the ethics of Christ's gospel; nothing else can bring the glad day of universal brotherhood.' Now, Mr. President, I will repeat again, that women have it in their power to place the world on a very high plane, and it is but ignorance which is keeping them and the world in bondage."

As he took his seat he was greatly applauded and the meeting adjourned.

CHAPTER XIX.

As the news kept spreading that the Russian gentleman and his wife were determined to devote their whole lives in order to help to bring a radical change by reconstructing the whole social system, it attracted the attention and aroused a great curiosity among all the people in the country. In one of the large cities, a conference representing every labor and trade union, was held, and every member was notified to be present at a meeting to be held where a message was to be given by the head of the Reconstructive Movement and his wife. So great was the interest aroused among the working people, that the members of the arranging committee became aware that no hall was sufficiently large to accommodate the numerous assembly, and it was decided to have a large tent erected for that important purpose. When the evening arrived everybody was astonished at the sight of the enormous mass of people. Fortunately, where the tent stood, there was ample room, and the tent was arranged so that those who were compelled to remain outside would have at least a chance to see and hear the young orators. At the appointed hour the young couple appeared on the platform, which was handsomely decorated with white and pink roses. As the presiding officer introduced them, the welcome they received was a most enthusiastic demonstration. After addressing the president and the ladies and gentlemen, Mr. Ivanohe began:

"I consider this opportunity to attend such a large gathering of reformers as a great privilege, for there is an immense power in a combination and unity of thoughts, good, high thoughts, which will, in spite of all opposition, flow into an enormous well of a mighty stream of such ideas that the human race is capable to conceive. We cannot help but admit that we live in a remarkable age. Is it not plain to every intelligent person that what really rules the world are ideas? When the public mind was filled with the idea that at the head of their government an individual, bearing a crown and sceptre, was their ruler and master, they were

ready to bow to the ground and become the most abjective subjects, no matter how cruel and tyrranical the ruler, and how great their deprivations and sufferings. You know what the world has witnessed when some leaders, whose ideas became strong that the wrongs which were annihilating the helpless people must be removed, how they began to spread the saving ideas, and in time the weak and nearly crushed human beings, stimulated and strengthened by the powerful ideas, set the rulers to flee from the thrones? Of course we know that the minds of the oppressed were not sufficiently enlightened to carry on fully the ideas and establish the needed reforms; we know that the obstacles were almost insurmountable, the unjust laws, the dreadful moral situation of society, the corrupted civil and political institutions, the extravagant costumes, we know that the complication of evils was so great that many of those who presented the saving ideas fell victims and martyrs for the sake of humanity.

"You, oh, you fortunate American people, you who have the right to be the real sovereigns, you must demonstrate the sublime ideas of the true, the real, and not the superficial human independence and liberty, so it will call for the admiration and respect of the whole world and become their living example! I have learned that these saving ideas need in this country a great renovation. I do not mean the ideas, but the people's minds must be renovated, and for theirs and their country's great benefit these ideas, defined in the dictionaries and by world-famous men concerning the principles of the Reconstructive Movement, must be constantly held before the people's minds. and then we may be sure that the twentieth century new system will soon be established. I will repeat some of them, for they are so good that we can never get tired, for they always seem new:

" 'The ethics of this principle are identical with the ethics of Christianity.'—E. B.

" 'The abolition of that individual action on which modern societies depend, and the substitution of a regulated system of co-operative action.'—I. D.

" 'A theory of society that advocates a more precise, orderly and harmonious arrangement of the social relations of mankind than that which has hitherto prevailed.'—W.

" 'A science of reconstructing society on an entirely new basis

by substituting the principle of association for that of competition in every branch of industry.'—W. D.

"'Any theory or system of local organization which would abolish entirely, or in greater part, the individual effort and competition on which modern society rests, and substitute co-operation, would introduce a more perfect and equal distribution of the products of labor, and would make land and capital, as the instruments of production, the joint possession of the community.'—C. D.

"'A theory of policy that aims to secure the reconstruction of society, increase of wealth, and a more equal distribution of the products of labor through the public collective ownership of labor and capital (as distinguished from property) and the public collective management of all industries; its motto is, 'Every one according to his deeds.' '—St. D.

"'The deepest depth of vulgarism is that of setting up money as the ark of the covenant.'—Th. C.

"'The citizens of a large union, industrially organized, have reached their happiness when the producing, distributing and other activities are such that each citizen finds in them a place for all his energies and aptitudes, while he obtains the means of satisfying all his desires.'—H. L.

"'No thinking man will contradict that associated industry is the most powerful agent of production, and that the principles of association are susceptible to further and beneficial development.' —J. S. M.

"'Government and co-operation are in all things and eternally the laws of life. Anarchy and competition, eternally and in all things the laws of death.'—J. R.

"Now, you see, my good friends, if every man and woman studies carefully the present social conditions, and set their minds at work, vivyfying and demonstrating the great ideals expressed by the deepest thinkers, then will the aspirations of every being be verified, for every human being will then reach moral, mental and physical perfection, and no longer will exist the dreadful conditions as described in the following poem by Josephine Conger, entitled:

OUR REAL WORTH.

Do you know what the mills are doing?
They are grinding us into gold;
Men and women and children
For barter are being sold.

In the South are a thousand children
Who will mint ten thousand pounds;
Pretty good profit in babies—
Pity they die of their wounds.

In the West are ten thousand workmen
Who dig up a million strong—
Splendid property, miners
Too bad they can't last long.

In the East are scores of women,
Who make most beautiful clothes;
But somehow they drop in their noontide,
And die of starvation and woes.

But what if the men and the women
And the children die by the score?
For every place there are dozens who wait,
And following these are more.

We to ourselves are as nothing,
But the wizards can make of us gold;
So men and women and children,
For barter are being sold.

Great God! must this go on forever?
Must this stream ever go through the mill?
Will the mills never tire of their grinding?
Nor the wizards e'er get their fill?

The decision lies with the people;
They may rise as a man, if they will,
And say that the mills must cease gorging
And that wizards have had their fill.

"Working people of America! remember that thinking people of other countries perceive the causes that produce the threatening effects in your country, and they do not hesitate to call your attention to it. Watch carefully the attitude of the press of your country. Try your very best to remove the veil or state of mind which hides the mental deformity, caused by the new aristocracy of money, which separates more and more the owners from the toilers, the real producers of all wealth. From their fine mansions they look down with contempt upon the worthy beings whose skill and energy beautify the world. I do not like to mention some ugly things of the past, but whoever reads history may look with apprehension concerning the changes that are taking place in this great republic. History will recall to the readers' minds, and warn them, for they will be informed of the monstrous feudal epoch, the abuses and violences committed by the inhuman inhabitants of the castles, who with impunity strangled the well being and liberty of the people! Your attention is called to the fact, which certainly causes great apprehension, that the women of the wealthy class are no longer satisfied to employ their native workers, but send to Europe, and frequently the cost of a single garment represents more than the salary of a capable and scientifically educated engineer or chemist for the whole year. Think and consider well how others see you. They warn you for they can see, perhaps more clearly, what the results will be. They tell you how the man who can spend one hundred thousand dollars a year in maintaining a yacht, feels a sense of aloofness from the producers of everything they possess. That their daughters, to feed the sense of aloofness, are not satisfied with wealth alone, but marry titled foreigners; and their sons, when educated abroad, become un-American in their ideas, and drop all sympathy with the mass of American citizens. The grave danger today is the destruction of the spirit of independence, unless you working people, who are the majority, use the ballot patriotically, which is the powerful and bloodless weapon placed, as American citizens, in your honest hands. A patriotic American, cultured and very intelligent, Mr. W. J. Stillman who had been an intimate friend of Emerson, said before he died, that he foresaw greater trials for the United States and its people, than any other nation had undergone. He trembled for his country, but had hope that it would emerge triumphant in the end. Oh, you workers

for the good of the down-trodden, appreciate now, more than ever, the independent spirit of your nation! Listen to what Rev. M. J. Savage said: 'Men work too much, they work too hard. What do I mean? I mean that the man who is compelled to toil the most of his waking hours, merely for the means of subsistence, cannot live a high human life. He has no leisure for thought, no time to cultivate his mind, little time to cultivate the affectionate side of nature, little time to question as to whether he has a soul, little time to think of the Father in Heaven or the kind of life he should lead as a spiritual being, a son of God. This grinding, continuous toil means barbarism, a hard, squalid, hopeless kind of barbarism, and this is why I have always been in favor of shortening the hours of labor just as far and just as fast as it could practically be brought about. And much more can be done in this direction than has already been accomplished! If all the world were wise, if all the people were willing to carry their share of the burden, if none shirked, if none attempted to place upon other shoulders more than they ought to carry, the world's work would be accomplished in three or four hours a day, and all the rest of the time be free. Free for what? Pure idleness? Why, I would be in favor of it if it were nothing more than that, because there is no more virtue in work than there is in play or rest, if you consider them apart, by themselves. And why should people not rest and play and sing and be happy if they can? The world works too much, and there is no possibility of the higher, finer civilization except in relief from this toil. There was no art, no literature, no music, none of these higher and finer things of human life until some men earned release from what we call common drudgery, and were able to dream, able to think, able to feel, to create these nobler, sweeter, more human, more divine things, than mere bread and houses and lands and horses and carriages, and the material accumulation of what we call civilized life. The world works too much. The poor man because he has to, and the rich man because he will; and a large part of this labor goes for what? For bread, for houses, for horses and carriages, for all the material, the lower side of life. Men must stop this eternal grind and care, and learn that they are men, that thinking and feeling and loving and hoping and admiring and enjoying are infinitely more important than the common and lower things that make up so much of common existence.' My good and

dear friends, do you think that when the people shall grasp these good, saving ideas, that they will oppose a system that will turn this grinding condition into a finer and higher civilization? Will any sensible being be opposed to the Reconstructive system, under which there will be no inducement for corruption of any kind, but sincere effort to promote the welfare of the whole people? When women shall understand these ideas will they not become the most enthusiastic supporters of it, when they become convinced that with the collective use of machinery nine-tenths of their burdensome toil will be saved, and they will no longer be drudges, and the servant girl question will be a thing of the past? Will they be opposed to this new system, which will give to everyone the proper chance to develop their talents? Will they be opposed to the great system which recognizes that the children of today will be the future men and women and that the best environments will be prepared for them, so as to fit them for their stations in life? Should not the farmers, as well as the other toilers, join this movement that will make their lives as pleasant as that of any other citizen? If there is any man or woman who opposes or is indifferent regarding this great work, it is simply because they do not understand it, and it is therefore our duty to spread these ideas, not occasionally or spasmodically, but daily and persistently, then the sweet promise that every human being shall come in possession of their natural inheritance will be verified, and we shall not only spread them, but put them into daily practice, and then we shall all see them grow with wonderful rapidity."

A tremendous applause arose as the speaker took his seat, and as the young wife stepped forward in the twinkling of an eye all commotion ceased. She stood a moment facing the audience in silence, and then said:

"Ladies and Gentlemen: I feel like repeating what the great Italian patriot, Joseph Mazzini, said: 'To what purpose do you profess to believe in that unity of the human race which is the necessary consequence of the unity of God, if you do not strive to verify it by destroying the arbitrary divisions and enmities that still separate the different tribes of humanity? Why do we talk of fraternity while we allow any of our brethren to be trampled on, degraded or despised? The earth is our work-shop. We must not curse it, we are bound to sanctify it. We must strive to make

of humanity one single family.' I do hope and pray that everyone present will be willing to do his and her share to help to establish the new and important system. I think that you all understand that liberty and happiness, for which the human soul has always craved, cannot be attained until we overcome, in a scientific way, every obstacle which prevents our reaching that high point which can only be reached by the unfoldment of the higher faculties Our strong desire to improve the social conditions must be nourished and strengthened, for 'desire' is recognized as the onward impetus, without which everything becomes stagnant. We must all study the situation carefully, upon all sides; we must fill our minds with the sublime ideas, and then carry them out in thoughts, words and deeds. When our minds accept these ideas as well founded truths, the process of Reconstruction must begin. We all feel that in a world whose Creator has filled it with limitless abundance, and poverty prevails, there is something very wrong. When we acquire the correct understanding of the sentence, 'Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and its righteousness, and all else shall be added unto you,' we will be ready to realize the blessings that result, by loving our neighbors as ourselves, and how limitless our ideas will broaden, and the world will be transformed, and all its inhabitants will enjoy what they are entitled to—peace and unfailing prosperity and happiness. We know that ideas are catching, and no person can live where high and true ideas are held without being affected by them. Read the history of the Huguenots, how, by the power of the new ideas, coarse plays, extravagance in dress and license in living, quarrels and scandals had almost wholly passed away, and the very countenances of the people were changed. How the coarse lines of sensuality had been swept away, and from every face shown only benevolence and truth. The present wrong ideas of grasping all we can for 'me and mine' has filled the world with all the horrors of misery and want. Ambition and selfishness have been the weapons always ready to destroy the true sense of life, and have created the social conditions which demand a complete Reconstruction. The Reconstructive system will enable mankind to understand their relation to each other, and the right everyone has to the natural resources upon which human existence depends, and when the people fully realize that they cannot control what belongs to every living being without suffering

themselves, we shall no longer see the human race divided into classes. Ladies, I wish to appeal to you, and every other thinking woman, to use your powerful influence for the amelioration of the present state of human conditions. Remember the dreadful statement made by the press, 'That the woman is a vampire. That woman has caused more heartaches and ruined more families than anyone who ever lived, and that if the public wants to know something about the modern vampire, they must study the divorce court records.' Women are at present more responsible than ever, if the rapid march of the destroying system of monopoly is not checked, they are told, and that they are the ones who are preparing the way and will make the great possessors of capital renew the claim that they are such by divine right, as did the tyrannical monarchs. Never before has the world's attention been called in regard to women's doings as it is today. I am very sorry to have to admit that what is thrown so furiously in the faces of the capitalists is not exaggerated. And who was, and is, the main supporter of those injurious, morally destroying conditions? The world has always been reminded that it is woman! In one of the books written by a prominent author you can read 'That the extravagant luxury of the ancient world, and of the middle ages, had the modesty to limit its display to a comparatively small circle. But that nowadays the insolent parade of the wealthy is not confined to the ball rooms and banquet halls of their set, but flaunts along the streets. That the places where their aggressive luxury is most prominently displayed are the promenades of the large cities, and their carriages drive along the streets splashing mud on the bare-footed, hungry crowd, and their diamonds—of course, the women's diamonds—never seem to sparkle with such brilliancy as when they are dazzling the eyes of the poor. That their extravagance loves to have journalism as a spectator, and delights to send descriptions of its luxury by the columns of the papers, into circles which otherwise would have no opportunity to observe the life-long carnival of the rich.' The press also reported the doings of the wives of American army and navy officers abroad, as having their little, all-important 'set' in their eyes as the cream of aristocracy, and that this arrogant set would not include any other woman of a less aristocratic position, any woman whose money was the result of her own honorable labor. Those worldly, narrow-minded, proud women were

reported as having refused to condescend to recognize a woman of great ability, who did her work well as a correspondent of American newspapers, and had won the esteem and respect of everyone who knew her. That honorable woman was universally liked, except by the proud women who drew the social line to crush and ostracize a working woman. To show how the crushing evil of class division is sustained, as a rule, by women more than by men, it was reported that the working woman who had been humiliated, was honored by a 'great' man, when the wrong act of the wives of his subordinate officers reached his ears, and he demonstrated the wise and tender heart of a gentleman of the old school. My good friends, the greatest need in human society today is that women's minds and hearts conceive and give birth to the sublime modern scientific ideas, to abolish the lines which divide the human family into classes, and the accumulation of wealth, upon which the former wrong is founded, for they must certainly know that the dominant element of oppression today is the idea of acquisition of money, and the world groans today under this merciless tyrant. The first step, I hope you agree with me, to free humanity of this crushing giant, is that women absolutely refuse to accept its offers, and they will, when they become truly conscious that every living being has the same rights and privileges, as a child of the living God, they will refuse to live in palaces while their fellow beings live in hovels, they will refuse all kinds of luxuries, while the great masses are continually struggling to obtain a mere existence, and they will no longer be the negative creatures of the past, but will become the positive and guiding beacon star, the hope and light of the world. From every student of this great reform we receive strong and true ideas, and from all sides we hear that to reach the two extremes of society, wealth, which demoralizes, and poverty, which debases, the help of women is needed to redeem mankind, and they feel convinced that their spiritual intuition will fit them to refine and lead the human family to the land of righteousness. They assert that they have already given a great proof of their ability, wisdom and keenness of mental perceptions. They are no longer confined to the narrow sphere of the past; their activity is surprising. Think of their organizations, unions, orders, clubs, councils, parliaments—their work reaches an extension that astonishes the world.

"Now, you worthy and industrious working people, do you think anyone can remain indifferent and not honor and respect labor, when they consider that without it there could have been no inventions nor discoveries, that nothing can appear in the world without labor? Could locomotives, steamships, mowing and harvesting machines, telegraphs, telephones, ocean cables, sewing machines, in fact, all the improvements, which are almost endless, could they have been introduced into the world without the enormous application of human labor?"

"No! No!" cried the audience.

"And has human labor, that great procurer of comfort, ever received its due recompense?"

"Never! Never! But it will soon receive it, under the new system!" cried the audience again.

"Yes, dear friends, you are right, but let us not forget for a moment that we must remove the causes, so that the effects will be compelled to disappear. Illiteracy, we are told, is on the increase, and can we expect that this neglected rising generation can fill the important position of free citizens? The Reconstructive system will furnish to every child—the future citizen—every advantage of development, and not compel them, as they are now, to crowd into the industrial field. Never in the history of the world has the useful worthy class, the working class, realized its dignity as it does today, and it has been warned by the earnest and true patriot, Abraham Lincoln, in his message to congress, that labor must be placed above capital. 'I bid the laboring people,' he said, 'to beware of surrendering a power which they already possess, and which, if surrendered, will surely be used to close the door of advancement to such as they, and fix new disabilities and burdens upon them until all liberty shall be lost.' What class of people laid the foundation and erected the supurb structure of this land of the free? Was it the idle, the despotic class? No! The working, the toiling class. Did the majority of the Americans uphold the ideas of kings, rulers and superiors? Certainly not, for where there are kings, rulers and superiors, there is slavery. The exercise of the sovereign power the founders of this blessed nation vested in the people at large, and only under such conditions were they able to extend a brotherly welcome to the oppressed and slaves of other nations. True liberty and progress are threatened today because capital is rapidly concentrating in

the hands of those who use it to close the door of advancement, and beware, oh, working people, of surrendering your God-given rights! The Reconstructive Movement, which is to prevent the downfall of this great nation, has taken, and is taking, hold of every means through which to arouse enthusiasm and lead the minds of the people where they can fully perceive what is required of them in order to tear down instead of cringe and crawl before the modern idol, the stultifying mammon. I would like to relate to you the great amount of good work which is being performed by one of our members, a Swiss lady, who is endowed with the extraordinary gift of detecting, at first sight, human character and disposition. You would be astonished to hear the large number of talented people whom she removed from conditions that were unfit for them, and placed them where they had the best opportunities to cultivate and develop their good qualities. This good lady is so thoroughly convinced that enthusiasm, fervor and courage can be aroused through the exercise of the finer talents of the human mind, that her entire life and means are devoted to discovering and utilizing them for the promotion of this great reform movement. We notified her that you had kindly invited us to attend this large meeting, and she asked us if we agreed with her, that on an occasion like this, elocution, song and music would be very acceptable, and she recommended two young ladies and a young gentleman, and with your permission, Mr. President, I will ask them to come forward."

Pretty soon the three young persons appeared and the lady speaker said:

"As we are all lovers of liberty, we will ask the gentleman to recite Ingersoll's 'Apostrophe to Liberty.'"

The appearance of the young man was very impressive; he began:

"O, Liberty! Thou art the God of my idolatry.

"Thou are the only deity that hates the bended knee.

"In thy vast and unwalled temple, beneath the roofless dome, star-gemmed and luminous with suns, thy worshippers stand erect. They do not cringe or crawl or bend their foreheads to the earth. The dust has never borne the impress of their lips. Upon thy altars mothers do not sacrifice their babes, nor men their rights. Thou

askest, naught from man except the things that good men hate—the whip, the chain, the dungeon key.

"Thou hast no popes, no priests, who stand between their fellow men and thee. Thou carest not for slavish forms, or selfish prayers. Thou hast no monks, no nuns, who, in the name of duty, murder joy. At thy sacred shrine hypocrisy does not bow, fear does not crouch, virtue does not tremble, superstition's feeble tapers do not burn, but reason holds aloft her inextinguishable torch, while on the ever-broadening brow of science falls the ever-coming morning of the ever-better day."

The impressive tone of his voice, his bright and inspiring countenance, his effective gestures, seemed to bring into visibility and convey into his hearers' souls the deep meaning of that modern 'Apostrophe to Liberty,' and his hearers gave way to an almost frenzied applause, and it continued until he again stepped forward and began to recite:

"WHEN THE WORLD IS FREE."

By J. A. Edgerton.

Across the future shines the golden age
Of brotherhood. A new humanity,
Foretold by poet, prophet, saint and sage,
Will work together—when the world is free.

Then science and religion will join hands,
And follow nature to divinity;
Then strife will cease between united lands,
And peace will prosper—when the world is free.

Then those who toil shall be the ones who own;
The slave no longer then will bend the knee.
The king will then be driven from his throne,
The people regnant—when the world is free.

Then greed and poverty will pass away,
And all will share a true prosperity.
The god of mammon, with his feet of clay,
Will be demolished—when the world is free.

Then will be little law—the Golden Rule
Will be enthroned—the law of equity.
The priest will vanish, with his creed and school,
And truth will flourish—when the world is free.

There will be happy homes, and happy men,
And happy women, raised from slavery;
And happy children. All the dark has been
Will be forgotten—when the world is free.

O, when the world is free! Transcendent time!
The golden age of dream! The years to be!
From better unto better, men will climb
Unto the highest—when the world is free.

When he finished the whole assembly arose to their feet, and with an intense feeling they all exclaimed:

"We shall! We shall make it free!"

When the president finally obtained silence, the lady pianist took her seat and the singer, who had selected a song from the "New Century Song Book," entitled, "The Trust-Owning Nation," began to sing, now in exulting tones, now tenderly soft, and again in exalting, happy, trumpet blast, the audience sat quivering and charmed. It appeared a most sublime and solemn moment. The song was as follows:

Oh! sweet are my dreams of the new coming nation,
Which prophets foretold should be born in a day.
The stars of the morning which sang at creation,
Will sing a new song with its first golden ray.
Then peace, like a river, will flow through the valley,
And sorrow no longer wage-worker enthrall;
Grand armies of labor, united, will rally,
Working all for each other, and each one for all.

CHORUS.

The trust-owning nation, the Golden Rule nation,
The whole people's nation, with each one for all.

The commercial wars of the old time are waning;
The turmoil of trade, with its tumult, will cease;
The unions of labor brave battles are gaining,
The day dawn is coming on dove wings of peace.
The kingdom of heaven, long prayed for, is nearing,
True friends of the Master, give heed to its call;
The homeless, poor outcast, this message is hearing:
'All work for each other, and each one for all.'

CHORUS.

The trust-owning nation, the Golden Rule nation,
The whole people's nation, with each one for all.

Then hail! the glad time when Old Wrong shall surrender,
The black flag of greed shall forever be furled;
Then justice shall reign, and with truth to defend her,
The white robe of peace will encircle the world.
That new time will come when we mark well our motto:
'United we stand, but divided we fall.'
Since all men are brothers, most surely we ought to
All work for each other, and each one for all.

CHORUS.

The trust-owning nation, the Golden Rule nation,
The whole people's nation, with each one for all.

When the singing and music ceased all faces looked as if beaming with joy and enthusiasm, and the fervent applause greatly affected Mr. Ivanohe's heart. He arose, and, after addressing the president, with a strong impression, he said the following to the audience:

"May your approbation of these great ideas be established in your minds forever, and when vividly energized by perfect knowledge, the results for the renewal of the social, political, religious and industrial conditions will be phenomenal! I will repeat what a great orator said, 'That this is an infallible, fundamental truth, let an idea once get afloat in the world, and it cannot be annihilated, and you can shoot down a battalion of soldiers, but you cannot shoot an idea.' My good friends, let us never forget that nothing

but great ideas must precede, in order to be followed by great actions. The main question now before the world is to transform the capitalists' ideas into the sublime Reconstructive ideas, and the more minds we succeed in enlightening with these saving ideas, the quicker we shall have the co-operative commonwealth, and one of the most important steps is the control of the political power by the Reconstructive reformers' minds, and now, we heartily thank you for your kind attention."

The next day the young couple arose early, and the first thing that attracted their attention when entering the sitting room, were two notes on the table addressed in large letters to Mr. I. K. He opened and read them aloud. The first letter contained an invitation to him to attend a large conference of a fraternal order, and the second was an invitation to his wife to speak before a large convention of women's clubs. The dates suited them perfectly, as it gave them time to provide everything necessary for such important undertakings. The meetings were to be held on the same evening. At the appointed hour Mrs. K. appeared at the large hall. In a most cordial manner she was welcomed, and as she was introduced the presiding officer explained to her how the majority of the members of the clubs had unceasingly demanded to beg her to appear before them and explain her views concerning the present social conditions. They were extremely glad that the lady who had aroused such a great interest in the whole country had accepted the invitation, and offered her the sincerest thanks.

"It is my turn," said Mrs. K., "to extend to you all my thanks, for I consider this a very important sign of the present times, when women are interested in the great social evolution. We can feel, and we can see, the unmistakable signs that the twentieth century demands the help of women, the sincere lovers of freedom, of progress, which means to recue from darkness, from want and suffering the precious human family. With the opening of the twentieth century the thinking women are marching in the direction outlined to them by those who first understood that the civilization of any country appears in accordance with the position occupied by the women. Those who first understood this great fact in this country had to demolish what, for more than half a century, seemed insurmountable barriers, which had been created by the opposite sex. Had they done it intentionally, with evil motives? No! They knew no better, and

would probably have never known, had not the gross injustices been exposed, in the strongest light, by the women! Woman's natural independence was not admitted; she was deprived of everything that was needed for her physical, mental and spiritual development, and men did not realize that to stagnate those powers in women meant to stagnate the best qualities in the human race. I am informed that the members of these many clubs are interested in every line that brings the most useful information in litearture, art, music, etc., and are gaining minute details, and are searching for more and more information. And how necessary it is, the social conditions being strewn with so many distortions, that women cultivate the higher thoughts! You know what Prof. B. stated, that 'A thought world is the only knowable world; and a thought world is the only real world.' I say that women's help is extremely needed, because the wrong tendencies created by that power which has always been recognized as the 'root of all evil'—the money power—is the greatest impediment to human progress. You know that, again and again, our attention is called to the sad fact that under the present system the home, among the poor, is a travesty. The mothers are compelled to work on account of the fathers' enforced idleness, and low wages, and the children come into the world physically and morally feeble. We women in this free country, who have more freedom than the women in other countries, if we do not listen and are not willing to help to solve the great problems of the day, we, more than men, shall be responsible for the increase of the wrongs that spread to make one shudder! Poverty and excessive toil are recognized as the cause of crimes and destroying vices, and especially the poverty and overwork of women and children. What most fearfully affects my soul is the thought that the destroying money power is upheld by women. What do you suppose men would do with the enormous piles of money, if women were to conscientiously refuse to share the ill-acquired wealth? Could a moneyed aristocracy be founded in this 'sweet land of liberty' were it not upheld by the women? Certainly not. Is that not creating a system which destroys the spirit of love and fills the world with greed and pride on one side, and envy, jealousy and hatred on the other? If we are what we claim to be—intelligent and moral beings, and lovers of progress—do we demonstrate those good qualities if we uphold a system which produces so many abom-

inations? Can our hearts remain indifferent when we learn the great suffering inflicted upon helpless women and children? Think of young children wearing their little lives away in mills, growing up in ignorance, as that which pervades uncivilized districts of Central Africa! Will not that hideous crime against humanity destroy what ought to grow into an ideal country? We hear that children are often brought up in the mills, lying in cribs behind their toiling mothers, working in the dust and filth, and those poor beings frequently narrowly escape being born there. Oh! May the Lord awaken a profound compassion in your hearts, you who have organized these great associations; may you turn your efforts in the direction that will make men understand that they are the present destroyers of their fellow beings."

At that moment the president's attention was called by some one stating that some persons were asking permission to enter and present some scenes, as recommended by the lady speaker.

"Mme. President," said the speaker, "allow me to explain that it is one of the methods of the Reconstructive Movement to impress the ideas, not only in words, but to produce them and fulfill the mission of art, so as to lead the minds to a higher and finer perception, and it will touch the invisible chords of sympathy, and awaken loftier and nobler sentiments."

A great applause followed, and the presiding officer told the usher to ask the gentlemen to come in.

In a short time everything was arranged. The lights were put out and there appeared a scene representing a cotton factory. The style was like the average buildings—plain and unattractive. The interior could be plainly seen; the spinning rooms with frames, the coarse material, corrugated rollers and spools, all placed where they belong, the poor little white slaves walking up and down between the frames like slave pens. The doors and windows were kept tightly closed; one could almost feel the bad air, filled with flying particles of cotton. Men and women were seen working in other departments. The whole appearance showed the overworked human beings. Their scanty living and the effect of the long hours and close confinement was shown in their weak and sickly forms. Four other factories appeared, which plainly showed that the present state of affairs was sapping manhood, womanhood, and their moral and intelligent sense. Next appeared such a contrast that it set

the whole assembly to whispering. It represented the interior of a drawingroom in a palace, the exterior of which was imposing and the interior dazzling. There appeared an American woman who was reported as having created a great sensation in Paris by the magnificence of her court cloak, which was especially made for her visit to the court of Russia. She was sitting on an elegant chair. This American woman, born in a land whose founders had abandoned their native countries, which were domineered and oppressed by tyrants; founders who had sacrificed everything dear to them to free themselves from the rulers, who had extended their oppressive power even into the new land. This American woman had lost sight of the noble acts that had created a land which became the refuge for every human being who recognized the sacred right of human liberty. This American woman was to go with a party which consisted of her husband, a duchess, a count, etc., to St. Petersburg, to the Russian court.

"My good friends," said the speaker, "I sincerely believe that if the American women, who are using the great wealth produced by the toilers in their native land, to rebuild the decaying European aristocracy, if they would conscientiously consider the great dangers that will curse their forefathers' land, they would immediately renounce what they so blindly undertake. If their souls were filled with tender love toward their fellow beings, they would appreciate and uphold what Russian women have done for the elevation of the Russian serfs. Russian women who studied the labor question, a question of such importance in our own land today, which must be solved on the basis of justice, or ruin and devastation will result from the continuation of the present wrong system. You, no doubt, know the closing words of one of those Russian women who labored and accomplished such wonderful awakenings among the slaves as to attract the attention of the government, and was arrested and sent to the dreaded and scourgeful Siberia, and whose soul, whether in or out of the body, has, like John Brown's, been 'marchin on.' Her closing words, referring to Nihilism, were: 'The association will avenge me, and its vengeance will be terrible. Let your hangmen and judges destroy us now, during the short time that force is still on your side. We set against you our moral might, and that will triumph! Progress, liberty and equality fight for us, and through these ideas no bayonet can thrust!' These closing words

were reported by the press as the firebrand which resulted in the Czar's death. A score of other women are reported as a terror to the authorities, but a synonym of liberty to the oppressed class."

Another scene appeared, representing a mill. Several little fellows with faces as serious as if life had been a constant battle, were operating some machines. Beyond where these boys worked was a little child, not over three years old, who evidently had no other play-ground than the mill floor. His mother and sister, a girl about twelve years old, besides attending to their work, kept a watchful eye on the little child. The sight was impressive, and became more so when the next contrast appeared—a scene representing the interior of a magnificent room. Steps of white marble, the balustrade of alabaster, the hand rail of American onyx, leading into the room. Some colored marble columns, the floor of exquisite mosaic, large mirrors, gorgeous tapestry and furniture. In this attractive place were two women seated upon an elegant sofa, conversing together. Their garments were magnificent. One was of white satin ornamented with silver clasps set with diamonds. The other was of coral pink silk; the bottom of the skirt was finished with a full flounce of silk muslin of three tints super-imposed. The uppermost was white, the next roseleaf, and the lowest pale green; sprays of laurel leaves among which were diamonds simulating dew drops. The two women were Americans, who had bought the titles of duchess and countess with the wealth produced by their American brothers and sisters.

"In some of the daily papers," said the lady speaker, "the existence of the two extremes of society are mentioned in a style as if it were perfectly natural, and the public mind seems not to be affected in the least, and therefore the Reconstructive Movement has already proven that the public mind can be aroused when human conditions can be made to appear in a manner so real that no one can help being affected by its sight."

Pretty soon another scene appeared. There was a room gloomy and barren. Upon a bed was a woman, chilled to the marrow, without fuel for the stove, and without food. On another bed was the body of her husband, who had been ill, and speedily grew worse with the coming of a cold spell. The poor wife, who had supported both by washing and house-cleaning, had no money to pay a doctor; the husband died, and the wife had no money to buy food or fuel, nor

to pay for an undertaker. He had been dead for some days, and in despair the poor woman threw herself on the bed, and no doubt would have died had not someone discovered it and reported to the health officer. The next scene represented the fashionable funeral of a pet dog by women of fashion and wealth. There was an abundance of costly flowers, and the coffin enclosed in a polished oak box, was of quilted white satin. There was a lavish display, and the dog's coffin was placed in a child's white hearse, and no expense was spared to give the animal a more solemn and precious burial and ceremonies, than to a 'mere' human being.

"Here," said the speaker, pointing to the miserable human couple, is a spectacle—a man and a woman, who ought to have been provided with everything that would have made them useful and happy. But who cared for them? And who is to blame? Every one of us, as long as we uphold this inhuman and oppressive system! Is this system, which deprives mankind of their lives' necessities, and in which animals are treated as precious beings, declaring them as being of aristocratic breeding, entitled to a life of luxury, can such a system be approved by our Creator? I cannot help but repeat Daniel Webster's sentence: 'The freest government cannot long endure where the tendency of the law is to create a rapid accumulation of property in the hands of a few, and to render the masses of the people poor and dependent.' Therefore, ladies, if we are truly sincere lovers of the glorious principles of human liberty, we must work incessantly for the establishment of the Reconstructive Movement. Why? Because if we do not, the people's minds will be stunted to such an extent that they will say 'amen' and defend what the press makes them believe—that the capitalists must be regarded with no other feelings but those of gratitude. And when can they understand that public opinion alone, when rightly directed, can sweep from the face of the earth all existing wrongs? The capitalists, some of the papers tell us, are doing too much good for the country. Is it true, when we know that they limit not only the wages, but the employment age, of the toilers, whose means of existence depend entirely upon their toil? This dreadful question of an age limit for the toilers has caused, we are informed, a furious debate in the Federation of Labor, and in order to prevent starvation the wealth-producers must seek refuge in dishonesty. In order to look young and not be discharged from the

position that will enable them to earn their bread, they must keep their faces constantly shaved and others must use dyes to hide their gray hair." Raising her eyes and with a most intense feeling, the lady exclaimed: "Our Heavenly Father, Thou who art no respector of persons, touch the hearts of every living American, and give to every one the necessary strength to dedicate their lives to the great reform, so it shall not be true that in this great republic will exist the spirit of self-indulgence and extravagance, but a spirit humble and filled with love and kindness, which shall fill the world with peace and good will."

The audience seemed so much affected that the profoundest silence lasted until a young lady, whom the speaker had motioned to come forward, appeared on the platform, then a loud applause began, and several voices were heard saying: "Yes! Yes, we are ready to join the great reform movement!"

The young lady made a graceful bow. In her left hand she held a paper, which she opened and read, "Echoes From the Past."

"'What is justice? To give every man his own.'—Aristotle.

"'Poverty possesses this disease: Through want it teaches evil.'—Euripides.

"'Poverty is a disposition of all kinds of evil. It is man's greatest foe.'—Alparache."

After she finished the reading, she eloquently recited the following:

IS THIS HUMAN BROTHERHOOD?

From the early dawn of morning
Till the closing of the day,
Helping to enrich another,
Toiling hard for little pay.
Living in a pent-up alley,
Or the coarsest kind of food;
Whilst the rich man lives in luxury—
Is this human brotherhood?

Better far to be a savage
In the desert, roaming free,
Than to live a life degraded,
And a mere machine to be.
But, cry preachers, be contented;
It is only for your good;
Man was made to toil and suffer—
Is this human brotherhood?

Vain it is to talk of freedom,
Whilst distinctions thus remain;
Slaves of wealth are slaves as truly
As the slaves that wear the chain.
Though God's earth was made for all men,
Owning not a single rood,
Robbed of all and blamed for toiling—
Is that human brotherhood?

Arouse yourselves, you toiling millions!
Join together in your might;
Cast off sleep, be up and doing
If you would obtain your right.
And oppression sweep before you
Like a torrent of a flood.
Be your watchword Truth and Justice—
Universal brotherhood.

—Exchange.

There was an enthusiastic clapping of hands, and after the young lady had withdrawn, Mrs. K. continued:

"You probably have read the statement made by a foreign philosopher, that 'while progress, for its own advancement; can battle only with the weapons of Truth, monarchy finds no lie too big, and no means too wicked in order to preserve itself. It is afraid that the masses of the people will become enlightened and demand their rights, and therefore a limit is put on their mental, as well as spiritual development, and lines of division are drawn which separates them into classes, and becomes one of the greatest obstacles to the fulfillment of the divine commandment, love thy neighbor as thyself.' This, our beloved country, which is free from that crushing form of government, has allowed another evil power to spring up, which is 'capitalism,' and one of our great patriots has plainly described the dangers of the money power, 'That, instead of being in accord with the spirit of democratic freedom, its usurpation of common rights and opportunities is 'monarchial;' that the practical annulling of the privileges and organic prerogatives of a people is 'monarchial;' the assumption of arbitrary authority over the means of life, the lands, fuels, the tools of trade, the opportunity to labor, and the mechanism of exchange and distribution is 'monarchial;' to make null the constitutional guarantee of an elective franchise, defeating the popular will, and reducing legislation to a commodity for price, is 'monarchial;' to assail and invade the human rights of free speech and free assemblage is 'monarchial;' finally, to abrogate the fundamental institutions of a people, the pledges and ordinances that united them as a nation, the bill of rights, principles and equalities by which their nationality became possible, is 'monarchial, tyrranous, and subversive of human liberty and progress.' I am very glad that a number of intelligent, thinking women are taking up the problems and are helping to solve them. One said: 'Take away wealth, fame and social distinction, which weigh not one jot in the balance of God, and we get clearer views. Break up cliques, level wealth with honesty, let merit be judged according to wisdom, and we get correct views of humanity.' Ladies, we know that the power of good words is marvelous, and think what a renowned physical scientist has discovered, 'that the sensitive plate of nature is so delicate that even the passing shadow of a cloud is registered on the earth, and its impressions could be re-

produced if we had the proper appliances.' Think of this, says one of our modern instructors, and then compare it with that mightiest engraver of life, the 'spoken word,' and then we can conceive the great importance of what we say, for when we speak words of truth we are absolutely building in the human brain new cells, and tearing down old ones. And why—great heaven!—why does not the American press, the moulder of public opinion, understand this great truth? How can it dare to openly boast that 'we Americans are getting very close to the nobility, and the time is not far distant —if not now—when we shall as 'dearly love a lord' as do foreigners? Is the public press, which claims to be the greatest moulder of public opinion, is it using its moulding power to strengthen the love of liberty, and remind the people of the eternal vigilance which liberty demands? The time has come, my dear friends, when the women of this free country must open their eyes, take in the whole situation, and learn the opinions of the titled aristocracy, whose pomp and cupidity induced them to marry the daughters of the millionaires and shamelessly admitted that those marriages were intended for the manuring of their countries. One aristocratic woman told her son, who was opposed to marrying the daughter of a millionaire: 'My son, you must marry her, for you know that the ruined grounds are fattened with manure.' The daughters of the wealthy in the past have sustained the corrupting systems, and what is more disgraceful and threatening today, is the fact that some of the daughters of American millionaires are becoming the manuring element to fatten and maintain the reckless and extravagant beings who bear the useless titles of princes, dukes, barons, marquises, etc. The press, the great moulder of public opinion, instead of disapproving, praised and flattered the American society women for wearing five million dollars' worth of jewels at the opera house in honor of a foreign prince! Is it any wonder, the opera house being ablaze with the flashing brilliancy of their costumes, if the men, as the press reported, threw beautiful bouquets of oratory at the emperor and prince? The duty of the great moulder of public opinion is to uphold the great truth, that where the unity of the human family is not, there is limitless space for envy, hatred and worldliness. What encourages the reform movement is that the good, thinking women are rapidly coming forward, as they are, in search of the beautiful 'Ideal Life' expressed

by a true philosopher—Ruskin: 'Mighty of heart, mighty of mind —magnanimous. To be this is indeed to be great in life; to become thus increasingly, is indeed to advance in life—in life itself, not in the trappings of it. They are advancing in life whose hearts are getting softer, whose blood warmer, whose spirit is entering into living peace.' The mighty change that will turn this earth into a heaven demands women as its apostles. Then will the oppressive system maintained by the vast private fortunes, which the press announces 'should be the pride of the nation,' will disappear. The great German composer, Richard Wagner, had a strong faith that the people will be the artists of the future, and that from the most absolute democracy the true music will come. His critics pointed to the multitude as a conclusive answer. He replied: 'This 'mob' is in no wise a normal product of real human nature, but, instead, is the artificial product of your unnatural culture. All the crimes and horrors which you find so repulsive in the mob, are only desperate incidents of the war which human nature is waging against its cruel oppressor, 'the modern civilization.' The modern civilization, which deprives the great masses more and more of what would cultivate their tastes and enable them to appreciate the grandeur and magnificence which human skill and energy have produced, and which ought to be used for the general, and not alone for private benefit.' My dear friends, let us remember that beautiful surroundings, if used in a proper and unselfish way, are inspiring. You know how the rude and fighting Romans, when they entered into the cities of Greece and saw the matchless works of architecture and sculpture with which they were embellished, their rugged pride was softened and they were smitten with the love of the beautiful arts. But, unfortunately, the chiefs of that time, who had destroyed so many nations, introduced an unbounded luxury, which vitiated entirely the grace and simplicity of ancient manners. You know how often we hear that history will repeat itself. The tendencies of the capitalists of today are dangerous; the Romans spoiled nations and today the capitalists are combining and it means the degradation of the producers of life's comforts. Ladies, let us remind every woman how, through all the ages, women have been wronged and oppressed, and unless they are willing to help to establish the redeeming Reconstructive principles, they may lose their freedom at one stroke. We know that the reform lit-

erature is a great beacon light, and we circulate it in large quantities. I will read to you a little article which relates how, on one occasion, a lady of distinction, at whose house a Scotch philosopher was a guest, bewailed the wickedness of the Jews in not receiving Jesus as their Savior. She finished her diatribe against them by saying: 'How different would have been his reception had he appeared in our own time! How delighted we should all be to throw our doors open to him and listen to his divine precepts! Don't you think so, Mr. Carlyle?' The plain-spoken philosopher, thus appealed to, said, in his broadest Scotch accent: 'No, Madame, I don't. I think, had he come with plenty of money and good recommendations, and fashionably dressed, and preached doctrines palatable to the higher orders, I might have had the honor to receive from your ladyship a card of invitation, on the back of which would have been written, 'To meet our Savior;' but if he had come denouncing those aristocrats, the pharisees, and associating with the publicans and radicals of the day, we should have treated him now very much as the Jews did then, and cried out, 'Take him to Newgate and hang him!' Ladies, I thank you for your great patience. It was not my intention to speak so long, and I kindly ask you to excuse me."

There was a storm of great applause. When the meeting adjourned a great number of the ladies surrounded her and expressed their sincere appreciation of her new and highly valuable ideas.

CHAPTER XX.

When Mrs. K. reached home she found her husband waiting for her. Both were happy at the great success of their useful work.

"I must tell you," said her husband, "that there were several persons who asked permission to write down the speech. I did not object, and asked one of them to do me the favor of giving me a copy, which he gladly handed to me before I left. I will read it to you." After he got through the young wife said:

"That is an excellent speech, and as I am asked to speak before a large conference of 'Women's fraternal orders,' and all these questions are of absorbing interest, and instructive to both sexes, I know you will not object to have me read it to them."

"No," he replied; "and I know you will introduce the necessary changes required for that occasion. I see we are asked to deliver speeches before an audience of missionaries and modern scientists."

"Very well, let us be thankful that the aroused public mind continues in its eagerness to listen to these new ideas, and what a stupendous progress will the world witness when the blessed system of Reconstruction shall be adopted by the majority of the thinking people!"

The evening for the gathering of the women's fraternal orders arrived, and the presiding officer introduced Mrs. K. as one of the most prominent reformers of the twentieth century, and the most enthusiastic greetings were extended to her by the large membership of the fraternal orders, and she began, addressing the president and friends:

"I will explain to you that the thoughts expressed in this essay were delivered by my husband before a large assembly of men's fraternal orders, and as I thought that it was as well adapted for the women as for the men, I will read it to you: 'The world's greatest need today, says the Fraternal Brotherhood, is, 'Look up! Lift up!' for it says there are thousands who are ready to pull down, as they are full of destructive energy. It says every member of the vast army enrolled under the banner of the fraternal orders has a great reason to rejoice in his membership, and that 'There is no grander

achievement than that of true fraternity.' We must admit that the fraternal orders are accomplishing much good, especially if, as they assert, there is no favored class, and no discrimination against one member as compared with another. It speaks of the phenomenal prosperity of these orders, while at the same time it speaks of misfortune, want and sorrow which visit thousands of homes, and that there is no scheme or magical influence that will give the fraternity any great financial backing, other than that supplied by the contributions of the membership, and you must acknowledge that under the present system the means of ninety-nine out of every hundred individuals are exceedingly limited. The fraternal orders plainly admit the present destroying conditions. Think, my good friends, of the great power in the enormous army of these orders to lend assistance to the workers of the Reconstructive Movement! You are told again and again that the road along which your fraternal institutions must march is strewn with boulders, and they threaten dire consequences unless you, as fraternalists, bestir yourselves and insist that certain reforms be inaugurated and pushed to a successful issue. In my fullest conviction I will say, and repeat, that under the present destroying conditions no orders, leagues, unions, clubs, etc., can inaugurate and push to a successful issue any kind of reform, except it be the radical reform which will put a stop to the weakening influence of poverty, which is causing steady physical and mental degeneration, and that radical reform is the Reconstructive system! If every member of the many and large associations will carefully study the principles of our radical reform, then they will learn that under the new system 'grim death' will certainly not be their only reward! Dr. Adler calls everybody's attention to the fact that poverty is the source of many evils:

"'1. Insufficient nutrition—leaving the body a prey to disease, and causing dreadful mortality.

"'2. Care—anxiety for the future, the uncertainty of existence. It is this care that comes to the poor man, and sits at his table—that comes at night and places hot coals under his pillow, and prevents him from sleeping.

"'3. The crushing of mental activity and growth in young men and women of talent and even genius, from lack of means of education and development.'

"You may already have heard how the workers in this radical

reform are seeking, and how easily they find, among the working class many talented persons, and how they provide them with means to cultivate their natural gifts. I have asked a young girl. a poor orphan, who, for some years, has been a toiling slave, till her health has gradually broken down, and, fortunately, one of our co-workers rescued her. She is a bright girl; she is willing to do any thing she is asked to. You will hear her recite, for it is our rule, when we are asked to speak, to take with us singers, elocutionists, musicians and artists, to whom have been given the best chances to develop their talents, and they prove of great assistance to impress upon the minds of the audience the principles of the new system. With your permission I will ask Miss Adeline to come forward."

A tall, slender young lady arose and walked toward the platform. With a voice clear and strong she began:

WHY WEALTH FLOWS TO THE FEW.

By B. M. L.

There are nine hundred ninety and nine today
Who have sorrow and wrongs untold,
While trust lords are draining their lives away,
By hoisting the standard of gold.
A thousand are wailing in want and despair
That one more may be rated a millionaire.

From the man of toil sweetest comforts come,
Though he owns neither home nor lands;
He that had builded the mansion with gilded dome
Lives a tenant with empty hands.
The combines have taken his right to a share,
That more gold may be coined for the millionaire.

Ever toiling, the nine hundred ninety and nine
Wealth-makers over all the earth—
From the sea and the land, and dark, gloomy mine—
Priceless treasures they now bring forth.
But the gold they gather by toiling and care
Flows at once to the bank of the millionaire.

Most noble these makers of wealth for the world,
Who with lightning, gas and steam,
Propel the great ships, while the trains are hurled
With the speed of a restless dream.
Such heroes should have enough and to spare,
And no more be the slaves of the millionaire.

When the nine hundred ninety and nine shall learn
Why their treasures all flow to the few,
With ballots or bullets the tide will turn—
Oh! then, vote with this thought in view!
Trust ownership means we must each have a share
Of the wealth that now goes to the millionaire.

The fervor and intense feeling with which the rescued slave recited the poem produced a magical effect. The encores and applause continued so unceasingly that she stood again facing the audience, which felt the living presence of a great moral power.

In an earnest and solemn manner she began:

STAND UP FOR LABOR.

B. M. L.

Stand up for men who labor,
Dare to defend the right,
Lift high the royal banner,
And with your ballots fight.
The truth at last will conquer,
None can her sword withstand;
Her soldiers all will honor
When justice rules the land.

Stand for the men who labor,
Let dastard despots know
Our Socialistic Order
Defies the nation's foe.
Full well we all remember
The days of Washington,
And each one of our number
Still honors Jefferson.

Strike for the men who labor,
With brave Old Hickory stand,
And swear by the Eternal
Greed shall not rule the land.
We love the grit of Jackson,
Who dared to stand alone,
Who fought the money monster,
And hurled him from his throne.

Vote for the friend of labor,
Take Lincoln for your guide;
Among great men, none greater;
For truth he lived and died.
Like him, make war with mammon,
Dethrone proud greed for gain.
Swear by the Great Jehovah
That justice soon shall reign.

Again the audience, with great applause, expressed their sincere appreciation, and the lady speaker began again:

"We must admit that this is a remarkable period, for we can see that the propaganda is growing, and it is surely plain that the most intelligent persons are trying to attract public attention to the fact that if the people remain in the present negative condition their dignity as citizens will be ground to the dust! Here is a strong plea by Geo. W. B., a great reformer. He said: 'There has been a cry for change, but thus far monopoly has been as deaf to the cries of justice as Pharaoh to Israel's cries. When starving labor protests, monopoly doubles the guards. When it strikes, monopoly calls the militia to feed the hungry with villainous saltpetre. How long will want remain non-aggressive in the presence of such abundance? How long will poverty remain loyal when oppressed by an idle class? Oppression drives loyalty to madness, and should monopoly grow more inhuman who can promise security? Every voice should counsel moderation, but in every crowded tenement, in every destitute home of forced idleness, in every hut whose small income brings want; in every closed shop, in every emptied coal mine, there are strong men, bold from desperation, who cannot hear the better counsels, and who are driven to look upon capital as an enemy, because they have felt its injustice. It is mockery to talk of patriotism to those who are crouching suppliants for work, and who must join a union to get pay enough to compromise with want. Toiling beings do not warm with enthusiasm over the glories of a country where inhumanity rules, where idleness fattens in vice and luxury, and industry bends under the burden of necessity. When the most imperative duty of man is to experiment upon how little he can live, patriotism is at a low ebb. The future is dark, but unless monopoly is dethroned and the whole industrial system changed, the people will gradually sink until despair arouses resistance, and then comes restitution through revolution. Deplore it as we may, the issue has been forced by organized aristocracy, and if relief comes, it must be from the organized patriotism of the masses. Where is hope or safety? There are millions of men idle and restless, thousands of homes in want, and a deep, dangerous murmur of fear, dissatisfaction and earnest protest on every hand, and where is safety but in the patriotism of the masses? Monopoly, by its arrogant meddling with public affairs, controlling politics,

lobby, legislature, the judiciary, and gathering the profits of all industries, has disgusted business men, discouraged farmers, and forced labor to secret enmity. It has fostered dangerous discontent in the great turbulent centers, and safety demands the best judgment of the wise, the grandest heroism of the brave, and the most prompt and vigilant action of the patriotic. Ladies, you know there is a great battle between the working and the capitalist classes, and that is the reason that the world is sitting on a social volcano, and most of the women of the capitalist class seem totally unconscious of it. Are not those battles a great hint to them that they ought not to court the injurious and vulgar extravagances? Mrs. E. W. W. said in one of her poems: ,

"'Heaven is a realm by loving hearts created,
And hell was fashioned by the hearts that hated.'

"Can we reach that high realm which loving hearts can create if we support the present system, which is based upon the aggressiveness and self-presumption of the lower nature of mankind? At this point I wish to ask your permission to present some of the scenes that are produced by artists whose aims are to represent the social conditions; they are stereopticon and realistic motion pictures. I see everything is ready."

As the lights were put out the first scene that appeared represented box cars, which are used to carry sacks of grain, potatoes and other things, and in those cars families were packed together like cattle, which, in hot days, was unbearable, forcing the little ones, with their mothers, to turn out and seek shelter underneath among the wheels. No sign of partitions or curtains for privacy were provided. The men worked for the railroad company at wages so low that they could not save any money, and they had to buy everything, at such high prices, from the company, that they were always in debt. Thirty of these box cars were full of men, women and children, transported by the railroad from another country, so that the capitalists could break and refuse all demands of the great mass of the toilers in their own land. On the ground about the cars was filth of every description, the company being responsible for the diseases caused by the foul surroundings of the camps, where their army of serfs are forced to live, the industrial conditions all tending toward making the life of the toilers unbearable. Those scenes disappeared, and in their places appeared a magnificent vision. It rep-

resented a grand avenue. There were beautiful mansions, the elegant architectural style, the picturesque and tastefully arranged ground, attracted the attention of every member in the audience, and presently appeared fine horses and equipages of such splendor and great display that it nearly eclipsed them. The ladies in the carriages looked so proud and stiff that it seemed to freeze the warm and admiring impulses that were awakened at the sight of nature embellished by human genius and labor.

"My good friends," said the speaker, "if the prodent destroying conditions do not affect women's souls, may the Lord have mercy on them! Recently we heard that one of the wealthy women had had a five thousand dollar home built for her pet dogs, and installed a cook for them; and another capitalist is building a palace that is to cost $3,500,000! If women were not the soulless ornaments of the palaces, would men take the trouble to have them built? Certainly not! Ladies, I am very sorry to say that if the sordid human senses rule the world, if capitalists alienate the human family from the natural principles of equality, women deserve greater blame than men; they may cause the great wrongs consciously or unconsciously, but the time is approaching fast when it will be recognized that the most powerful element to save or ruin the world is womankind! Everybody who has studied the great events in the history of the world must admit it. Recently a statement has been made by a bishop, 'That the women of this country are responsible for three-fourths of the crimes committed,' and Mrs. E. W. W., who is a great student—I will mention some of the most convincing passages, for the lady said that instead of reproving the bishop, she agreed with him, to a great extent. I presume it is not new to you, ladies, but it is worth repeating again. She said: 'Much of the crime of the world can be traced to the pre-natal conditions of the criminals. Mothers who hate their unborn children and dwell night and day on thoughts of destruction, bring children into the world who are destructive and whose minds are filled with hatred. The father may be equally guilty in rendering the home an unhappy place, yet a mother's disposition is the one which gives the home its atmosphere. Again, I have known the dispositions of two generations of people to be ruined by the disagreeable and quarrelsome nature of one woman. Mothers who allow their children to be disorderly, extravagant and selfish are helping

them to tread the path toward crime. The daughter who is brought up to believe it her right to have whatever she wants, no matter who suffers to gratify her, is the woman who drives her husband into forgery or defalcation, if he is not wealthy enough to meet her demands, or strong enough to deny her. It is woman who figures as angel or demon, and there ought to be a chair of motherhood in every women's college, teaching young women this incontestible truth.' Now, ladies, I do not think it is enough to have a chair of motherhood in every women's college, but in every home, and when the new Reconstructive System shall take the place of the destructive competitive system, women will no longer be denied the necessary opportunities to transform the world into a happy home for the human family! 'If we convert the mother, we convert a nation,' says Mr. Saxton. Oh, my good friends, it is something appalling when we hear that 'We are a nation of speculators. The craving for wealth becomes a disease. Men are money-drunk.' Oh, how greatly woman's help is needed, and do you suppose they can remain indifferent when they fully understand the cause that makes this—a nation of speculators? I say, let every one carefully study the conditions that are creating more oppression and hatred, and those conditions must be radically changed, and with women's help the change will be obtained more rapidly. Let us consider some of these conditions as stated by the reform press, 'That the development of industrial power, and time- and labor-saving machinery, is one of the principal facts of the century. In raising wheat, from breaking the ground to sacking the grain, one hour with modern machinery will accomplish as much as twenty-two hours with the old time plow, sickle, etc.' Think, ladies, four men, with the aid of machinery, can plant, raise, harvest, mill and carry to market, wheat enough to supply with bread 1,000 people for a year. To shell 60 bushels of corn by hand takes 95 hours of labor time; with machinery, one hour is enough. To make a plow by hand took 118 hours, with a labor cost of $5 35; with machinery now a plow is made in 3¾ hours, at a labor cost of 79 cents. To build a standard platform road wagon, with two movable seats and a leather dash-board, takes 53½ hours of labor time with machinery, against 204¼ hours with the old hand tools, and the labor cost with machinery is $8.48 cents, against $43.07 with hand work. In sawing lumber by machinery the saving of labor time is 375 to 1, and the saving of muscular exertion much greater still. One man with a

double-surface planer will smoothe as many boards in a day as 40 carpenters with hand planes. To make 12 hard-wood bedsteads now, takes 41 hours and 6¼ minutes, against 571 hours by hand. The labor cost by hand was $141.90, and by machinery $6.06. One woman with a sewing machine can do as much as 12 to 20 with needle and thread. The sewing of 100 yards of Wilton carpet takes 1¼ hours by machinery, and 27 hours by hand. The making of 100 pounds of 6-ounce carpet tacks requires 8 hours today, against 810 with the old hand tools. Ladies, I would like to mention everything that is produced today through machinery, which ought to be a blessed sign of progress. It is very important for everybody to know it, but under the present system it creates a critical, a fatal condition for the masses of the people. The soulless financiers are securing control over all that is indispensable for human life and comfort. Oh, may the ever-present Power enlighten the souls of men and women, so they shall never forget the axiom of liberty, that free people must never allow their power to be taken from them, then will the world witness the peaceful removal of the cruel competition which is increasing with the displacement of labor by machinery, and establish the Co-operative Commonwealth. My good friends, I hope that you will do your very best to spread the reform literature, which fully agrees with the lofty ideas on government by the father of this country, who said: 'It is our true policy to steer clear of permanent alliance with any portion of the foreign world. Why, by interweaving our destiny with that of any part of Europe, entangle our peace and prosperity in the toils of European ambition, rivalship, interest and caprice? Let us impart all the blessings we possess or ask for ourselves to the whole family of mankind. Let us erect a standard to which the good and honest may repair.' We have not the least doubt that if that true patriot were alive today he would be one of the strongest supporters of the Reconstructive Movement. His kindness, his loving heart, would soon discover the remedy to empty the almshouses which are filled with paupers, and prevent the strikes of tens of thousands for a wage that will give them enough to eat. Ladies, I suppose you know that the increase of crime, insanity and poverty is spreading like a plague, and the Destructive Movement is overflowing with rage and hatred against the present system, and is becoming more and more dangerous, for its only remedy is destruction. They unceasingly condemn the ab-

surdity of capitalism, which is multiplying churches, universities and libraries, while this wrong system causes corruption everywhere, in public as well as in private life. In order to convince the public they call its attention to the census bulletins, which present the sad state of affairs, of the increase instead of the diminution of poverty. In 1880 the number of paupers in the almshouses was 66,203, and on July 8, 1891, the number was 73,045. In 1880 the number of prisoners in county jails was 12,691, and in July, 1891, the bulletins show the number during 1890 to have been 19,538. The number of convicts in the penitentiaries in 1880 was 35,538, and on February 14, 1891, was 45,233, an increase in ten years of 9,695, and the total population only increased 24.86 per cent. That Destructive Movement is bitterly opposed to the Reconstructive Movement It claims that to succeed in reconstruction the old structure must be completely torn down. We entirely agree that the old, injurious structure must disappear, but instead of relying upon the past and old methods of using violence and destruction, our Movement appeals with irresistible force to reason and moral power. You have, no doubt, heard how many men are turning and appealing for women's help. They openly declare that women, better than men, can discover the cause of the great and increasing evils, and never before were women ready as they are today, and never before have they felt the necessity to organize so as to obtain everything necessary for the betterment of their sex, which means the betterment of the whole race. Women's activity in this remarkable epoch is astonishing, and if they, with strong desire to improve the world, join the Movement of Reconstruction, the assertion so often made that the civilization of the nation depends on the condition of the women, will be proven as it has never been before. Says a woman of great prominence in the 19th century, 'Why should I have such a poor and meagre opinion of the female sex? I am acquainted with many persons of our sex who concentrate in themselves so many good qualities as one would, only with difficulty, find in the other sex.' There are great upheavals that are causing general unrest, shaking to their foundations the imperfect social, religious, political and industrial institutions, and the large number of modern reformers are preparing the sincere truth-seekers to enter into the great Reconstructive Movement. We hear on all sides that this new century demands thoughtful and intelligent women, and they are responding with

much fervor and to such an extent that men's ideas concerning them are being completely changed. It is admitted today that one of the most wonderful features in the progress of the past century is the progress of women. Fifty years ago only three or four occupations were open to women, and as a result of their incessant struggle to obtain their rights, today every door stands open before them, and they stand as a recognized power in the world of science, literature and industry. But remember, dear friends, that the present system cannot offer women—nor men, I must say—the necessary opportunities to demonstrate the progress they have acquired. The present system, injuring not only women, is bound to bring both sexes into a condition of wage slavery. Ladies, consider well the present situation, and you will become convinced that women's advancement, if not used to change the present social and economic system, which is, as one of the great reformers said, morally abominable and thoroughly anti-Christian, and destroys human souls and bodies, they unconsciously will multiply the existing evils, and will be the unfortunate ones who will prevent the wheels of true progress from revolving. Allow me to repeat again to you all, join the great reform movement, and you will be the modern powerful helpers to break the chains of tyranny, but if the twentieth century women refuse to perform the new and only saving duties, woe to them! Men are declaring dreadful things. Dr. R. B. H. states that unless something radical is done the entire population of the United States will be insane in less than 260 years. That within the last fifty years the number of insane persons has increased 300 per cent, and at the rate the population is going it will only take 260 years to embrace them all. He suggests better education of the masses, and 'regeneration must begin with the unborn,' he said. I am sorry he did not explain better what he meant by the 'something radical.' One lady, we are told, has been the means of firing hundreds of the women in the upper classes all over the United States to better the terrible conditions under which women and children are obliged to earn their daily bread. Tell me, my good friends, how can the terrible conditions be improved as long as we create upper and lower classes? Another lady said: 'The trouble with girls today is, they think only of clothes and men. Girls,' she said, 'should be taught to prepare themselves for motherhood instead of constantly to think of which color is best suited to their complexion, or what style of gown produces

the most stunning effect.' This lady, like many others, uncovers the wrongs, but does she suggest what must be radically removed in order to give them a mighty chance to overcome the false ideals? Can they become independent, when, under the present system, 'fashion's decrees' reduce them to one of the worst kinds of slavery? Do not those false ideals fill their minds with dissatisfaction, worry and vanity? A famous singer, who is trying to start a reform in women's clothes, says that women today wear everything and they wear nothing. That the clothing is not a decoration, that it is not dressing, it is the piling on of silks and satins, furs and jewels, until one loses sight of the wearer by the gorgeousness of the clothes. The lady says it is time for women to issue a declaration of independence from their dressmakers and commence wearing rational clothing. Ladies, what is the cause of women's dependence and slavery; is it the dressmaker, or the competitive system? You probably have read how recently an exasperated dressmaker exclaimed, 'The next generation of sewing girls will be born blind!' Two of her best hands had been given sick leave because they could not see what they were doing. This hem-stitching mania, and feather-stitched insertions, she scolded, are bad enough. 'Ten of my eighty girls have had to give up work within the last three years since the fancy work on gowns became a craze. The narrow ribbon work and the tiny ruchings with narrow lace edgings are also maddening.' My dear ladies, I feel that the time is coming fast when women will really become independent, for they are beginning to recognize their 'True Being,' and they will certainly approve what one of the advanced women said: 'That the Reconstructive party appeals to her because: It respects the rights of women. It dignifies manual labor. It will make child slavery impossible. It will give the individual a chance to expand. It will provide for the general welfare of the people. It will raise the standard of purity in the race. It offers the best methods of dealing with the liquor problem. It will give all people the opportunity to become free and equal. It will make it possible for women to grow strong and normal. It offers the best opportunity for the development and growth of the fine arts. It will make it possible for women to grow to their full moral and spiritual standard. It will produce a higher race of people, and a higher literature than the world has ever known. It will give opportunity for scientific investigation and discovery. It will abolish

the rule of tyranny, and will introduce Christianity into the world for the first time in its purity. It will take the slums out of the cities, and in their places plant beautiful gardens, and build schools of learning. Under that new system, old things must pass away. All things must become new, and the true meaning of life, as taught by the highest prophets of the ages, will be possible!'"

There was a great applause.

"Then we shall see a new heaven and a new earth!" exclaimed nearly everyone.

"Yes, and please remember," said the speaker, "what the writer said, that 'What has been done by women in the past, can be infinitely improved upon by the women of the present; let us be up and doing.' Then the statement made by the fraternal orders, to 'Look up, and lift up,' will not remain empty words."

Thanking the audience, the lady withdrew and the hearty applause was renewed.

The next day Mr. Ivanohe said to his wife: "You remember, my dear, how the papers claim to be the best helpers in the world? Now, you will notice that some misrepresent us, some criticise, and others condemn us, and then others advise us to stop our work, to retire, and not come in contact with the inferior classes, and enter, as we are entitled, among the highest society of the land. Let us thank heaven, my good wife, that the study of the existing conditions has brought to our understanding the abysses and the terrific breakers under the shining surface, which dash to pieces the pleasures of those who plunge into the deceiving worldly extravagance and pretentiousness. In this remarkable epoch, the excess of fury and rancor of the newspapers seems to do not a bit of harm; on the contrary, it helps us. Look at this pile of invitations. They come from many of the states."

"Yes," said his wife, "we have a great deal of work at hand, but I am very glad that the public interest is increasing."

CHAPTER XXI.

The next evening the young couple appeared at the hall where the missionaries had invited them to deliver a speech, and, as usual, they had no idea of finding such an extraordinary gathering, and they received the most hearty greetings as they were introduced by the president. As soon as perfect order was obtaind, Mr. Ivanohe arose, and after addressing the president and the audience, he began:

"You have been very kind to invite us to speak and express our opinions concerning the present social conditions. Allow me to tell you, missionaries, you who are sent by Christian churches to convert the natives to Christianity, that according to the views of the great Reform Movement to which we belong, your work, although carried on with the best intentions, cannot develop the spirit along the lines of least resistance, and you cannot obtain the conditions which are most favorable as long as the existence of mankind is not based upon the principles of absolute right and justice. The conditions that surround the people, socially, religiously, industrially and politically, have made them too negative to respond to any effort of the teachers called missionaries. And why? Because true Christianity is not introduced, and, being kept in a base condition, it is impossible for them to realize their spiritual power. The Reconstructive System recognizes the great fact of the 'Fatherhood of God and the Brotherhood of Men,' and, therefore, its principles are to improve, radically improve, the conditions and surround the human family with the elevating influences that will appeal to their higher soul qualities, instead of the lower senses. Many of the so-called Christian churches are too far behind; some of them offer no remedies; on the contrary, they denounce and condemn the Reconstructive Movement. Think, one of them says, that this movement wants equality between Americans and Hottentots, between Germans and Chinamen, between English and French; equality between learned and unlearned, between artist and farmer, between deformed and perfect; equality between the good and the bad; equality between faithful wives and prostitutes, between lovely daughters and stage girls at the dance hall.'

Do not these so-called Christian churches show to the world that their hearts are hollow, empty of the Divine Love? Do they practice the Divine Principles taught by the unselfish, loving Master, who told to the priest, ritualistic and hypocritical pharisee: 'Even the publicans and harlots go into the kingdom of heaven before you!' Now, please listen to what a modern woman reformer said, and the world may rejoice that the twentieth century women are studying the spiritual, or higher laws, and will then no longer pay homage to ceremonies, forms of doctrines, or theories of men. This progressive woman, Mrs. J. F. K., does not divide the human family, but says: 'Open the mind to the reception of mighty fulfillments in and by the races of 'all' mankind. Effort and exercise are the two chief sources of all mental, as well as all physical improvement. From the spiritual plane, as the race is now developing, comes every good and perfect gift of excellence, every inspirational evidence of power. And to every one who will learn of his or her spiritual power, the whole world is a place of the greatest import, a vital reservoir of information, eternal in its interest and development. They will know that here is the place of Vision, the place of Prophecy, the place of Illumination, and the place of Knowledge, which will make them ready for the mental and moral development.' The Reconstructive Movement alone, in our opinion, can transform the whole world into a place of the greatest import, and I do not doubt that you will admit that under the present system, the following thoughts and ideas have prevented, do prevent, and will prevent the world's advancement.'

"Meditation of a Doctor: 'What a cursed season! Nobody sick! Not even a dog has a cold!'

"A druggist: 'Everybody is in good health in this beastly town.'

"A grave digger: 'If we could only have a little cholera, I would give my daughter a dowry!'

"A military man: 'Twenty years of peace! It's the ruin of my career!'

"A judge: 'If it weren't for the criminals, what should we do?'

"A merchant: 'If I succeed in driving my neighbor into bankruptcy, I'll get his trade!'

"A farmer: 'Such a calamity! The country has produced so much that the market is glutted. Blessed be the years of small crops!'

"A lawyer: 'Oh, such a stupid town! Nobody wants to prosecute anybody else!'

"A priest: 'Ah! If the people would only remain in ignorance, we would always be sure of the simpletons!'

"A policeman: 'If it weren't for the robbers, I would have to steal for a living!'—(La Squilla, Bologna, Italy.)

"This is a very plain description of the destroying thoughts and ideas forced upon the human mind by a system under which no one can gain but at the expense and suffering of others. The natural way of living becomes an impossibility. The Golden Rule, 'Whatsoever you would that men should do unto you, do ye even so unto them,' is set aside, is ignored, for capitalism is growing more arrogant, and the masses will become more abject slaves. My good friends, you know the preachers complain of the absence of working people from the churches, but do they demonstrate that they take to heart and are willing to stand on the side of the oppressed? They do not! As one of our reformers said, 'There is an economic cancer gnawing at the vitals of the race,' but a high-priced preacher from a capitalist pulpit said, 'The pulpit has no right to speak, save on the moral aspects of industrial problems in their relation to righteousness and character.' Ladies and gentlemen, there are two powers in the world which, unfortunately, are used to misguide instead of develop and harmonize the human family. One, I am sorry to say, is the pulpit, and the other, the press. Mr. J. L. McCreery has expressed in his poem what every thinking person must approve. It is entitled

SOME PREACHERS.

I suggested to my neighbor: Let it be the rule henceforth,
When we hire a man to labor, pay him all his work is worth;
Not withhold a portion of it, and retain it as our own—
"Interest," "dividends" and profits"—reaping where we have not sown.

If a fortune we inherit, or a stronger arm or brain,
'Tis not our reward of merit—wherefore our financial gain?
Strong or weak, we all are brothers, and the Golden Rule runs thus:
"We should always do to others as we'd have them do to us."

Thereupon arose a preacher, and explained in tones irate,
"Infamous and dangerous teacher, you would shipwreck church and
state;
In the name of all things holy, I demand that you desist
From such wickedness and folly—you ungodly Socialist!"

But I answered, never quailing: Have you thought, my reverend
friend,
What it is you are assailing, what it is that you defend?
To your candid observation, and your judgment, cool and wise,
Are we now a Christian nation, with the whole the name implies?

You will find, if you examine into things as they are now,
That it is not God, but Mammon, unto whom the masses bow;
Competition, most inhuman, killing out "for business ends,"
All that's best in man or woman, for the sake of "dividends."

Knavery wins, and is applauded, honest poverty is spurned,
And the laborer is defrauded out of half of what he earned;
Multitudes of starving people in the slums and alleys dwell,
In the shadow of your steeple—yet, you tell us all is well!

One would almost think you did not know the man of Galilee
Ever had declared, "Forbid not little ones to come unto me!"
For you seemingly are suited with a system that confines
Children stunted and embruited, in the factories and mines.

O, consistent "Christian" pastor, who your hearers would persuade
The commandments of your Master were not meant to be obeyed!
That His plan should be regarded an "impracticable scheme,"
And His Golden Rule discarded as an "irridescent" dream!

When you pray (one day in seven) "Let thy will be done on earth
As it now is done in heaven," what is your petition worth
When you hurl denunciations at the agents of His will,
Who, through laws of state and nation, seek His mandates to fulfill?

Are you ready with sufficient and acceptable reply,
When the holy omniscient judge of all shall ask you why,
When on earth, where He intended righteousness and joy should
dwell,
You encouraged and defended those who made of it a hell?

There was great applause and some were heard to exclaim, "God bless the poet!"

"Yes, God bless the poet!" said the speaker, "and may those true ideas reach and convert the soul of everyone who reads them! And now, please listen to what a prominent reform paper says in regard to the other power, 'the press:' 'But the press! This, indeed, is the greatest source through whose channels the capitalist class poisons the minds and inflames the passions against justice. Through the press, useless and criminal laws have been fomented, nations destroyed and despoiled, legislatures corrupted, morality defied, peerless characters ruined, scandals condoned, slaughters defended, and, worst of all, the robbery of the working class justified in the name of progress. Workingmen, try to estimate, if you can, how many strikes have been lost, how many workingmen massacred, how many of labor's murderers have gone free, how many children crushed out, how many women broken and prostituted through the use of this gigantic force owned and controlled by the capitalists of the world. And it is through this medium that the capitalists, now embarking upon a 'campaign of education' against the great reform movement, expect to do their principal work. With the daily press they can reach millions of workingmen and women. This is the age of reading. The workers are reading and thinking as never before in the world's history. The capitalists will spend millions of dollars upon the press to the hundreds bestowed upon libraries, universities and hospitals.' If anyone doubts, or thinks that this is an exaggeration, I will quote what a distinguished writer said at a banquet in reply to a toast to 'The Press:' 'It is true,' said he, 'that there is no such thing as an independent press.' He also said that he was paid $150 a week for keeping honest opinions out of the paper with which he was connected, and others were also paid large salaries for doing the same thing. That the business of a leading journalist is to distort the truth, to lie outright, to vilify, to fawn at the foot of mammon, for they are the tools and vassals of the rich men behind the scenes; they press the button, and the tools do the rest. Their time and talents belong to those selfish monsters, and they are nothing more nor less than intellectual prostitutes! Oh, how often my soul feels depressed when I think that those intellectual beings prostitute themselves; why do they not listen and treasure the spirit, the earnest appeal made by that incorruptible, conscientious,

that far-sighted Swiss patriot, Nicola della Flua, 'Never to accept gifts from those oppressors, for it means for them a sure moral death, a surrender of their independence—of their manhood!' You, good minded missionary workers, if, when you read the daily press and consider well every point, and listen to what every deep thinker says, you will become convinced that we are all solemnly bound to learn everything that is transpiring in this remarkable epoch. We will learn that a great industrial crisis is approaching, caused by the rapacity of capitalism. You certainly know that want and misery have been the main cause of revolutions in history. May your hearts be touched, and may you realize in time that capitalism is creating in this country, in this free country, an external halo which will erect barriers of separation that will stand between the real human nobility, which is the useful working people, and the few capitalists, who, led by the spirit of greed, feel already convinced that they have the people under their full control. They know that capital, upon which everything, even the maintenance of life, has been made to depend, will furnish them with more power than any tyrannical monarch has ever had! Woe to the whole world if this unique country should step backward and create worldly ranks and distinctions! Let us hope and pray that the capitalists may see the precipice opening under their feet, that they may hear before it is too late, the mutterings of the disturbed and restless masses. Let them remember that their unjust dealings fill the people's hearts with hatred and vengeance, for they completely sweep from the world the Divine ideals of fraternal love and justice! Think of the endless piles of capital on the side of the few, and the endless toil on the side of the helpless many! The press is stirring up the mind of the public. In one paper you can read the news of a bride's gifts worth a million dollars. Gifts that had to be guarded by detectives, for they were not less than ropes of pearls and diamonds, jeweled tiaras, corsage ornaments, stomachers, diamond, pearl and ruby rings, jeweled fans, crescents, stars and brooches studded with diamonds, pearl inkstands and scores of other valuable gifts. In another paper you can read how the working people, in order to obtain the necessary remuneration for their toil, must recur to strikes! In another paper you can read: 'Poor mothers and children given an 'outing'.' Among those poor human beings could be seen half starved mothers, fading day by day. Some one frankly stated, 'that the outing of the over-

worked and worn out mothers of half-starved and ragged little children, to whom would be given a day at the seaside, where is God's clear sunshine and pure air, would do them more good than all the lofty sermons that are delivered in twelve months.' Oh, my good friends! Let us all unite in this great reform movement; let us incessantly spread the infallible truth, that one power alone can prevent this nation from retrograding, and that is, the 'collective, popular will!' Under the Reconstructive system the people will understand that they are the state, and they will establish the laws that will protect them, and then the oppressive bosses will disappear. The people will then become able to work out their own salvation. The rule of the majority for the good of all, instead of the rule of the trust magnates, will bring abundance for every living being. Under the new system, the modern sciences will do for mankind what they have never done before. The great discoveries that bring all kinds of comforts will be freely applied for the betterment of the whole race, instead of creating a banded aristocracy of dukes, earls, counts and marquises of the steel, coal, iron and other trusts. It will create through its glorious mission the greatest amount of blessings, the highest order of life. You know that the great problems of today must be solved. In order to solve them, not superficially and temporarily, but radically and permanently, we need the assistance and co-operation of the other half of the human family, who are already giving strong proofs of their willingness to accept the philosophy of the Reconstructive Movement. With your permission I will withdraw, and give the place to my wife."

There was tremendous applause. When perfect order was obtained the lady began:

"Ladies and Gentlemen! Every thinking woman understands that her co-operation is absolutely necessary. Women are blamed today as they have never been in the history of the world, for the social and civic wrongs. Recently we read how a bishop threw a bomb into the camp of the women of America: 'The women of this land,' he said, 'are responsible for three-fourths of the crimes, indigence and poverty in the United States. If the women of this land,' he continued, 'were more broad minded, more thoughtful, more intelligent, three-fourths of the depravity that curses the present day would disappear!' Not only in this, but, as well, in other countries, women are blamed. A prominent man in Europe said that aristo-

cratic women devote their days solely to foolish amusements, useless actions, interminable toilets, making seances with dressmakers, luncheons, dinners, pink teas, receptions, balls, and theatres; that they spend their time in gossip, which is stupid when it is not wicked; that they shirk motherhood, and when they have children they are mostly intrusted into mercenary hands. Oh, my dear countrywomen, you know that in the past woman's power was not understood, and through her immense efforts she succeeded in arousing a new 'Woman's Era,' and her reward shall be, when, through her sincere and earnest efforts the Reconstructive System shall be established, a sweeter life and grander opportunities to develop the Divine ideals of Love and Justice, that shall become manifest in all the world! The time will soon come when the missionaries will become convinced that instead of wasting their time abroad, it is their duty to perform the missionary work at home. The following statement by John Swinton may seem of little importance to those who take no interest and are indifferent in regard to the conditions of their fellow beings, but it is of great importance to every true reformer. He said: 'Out of all the thousand arguments that buttress the demand for a short work day, here are three: First, it is a moral elevator; when the hours of labor in England were the longest, the degradation of the laborer was the lowest. Just as the working day has been shortened, so have the working class risen out of the slough. When the working hours in England were long, sottishness was the bane of industry, and drunken Saturday night was followed by soaking Sunday, black Monday and blue Tuesday. After a long struggle hours were reduced, and sottishness diminished. Ten hours were demanded, and finally won, when again sottishness was enormously decreased. Not yet satisfied, a half-holiday Saturday was obtained, when once more there was an immense decrease of sottishness, which does not now prevail to one-half its former extent. The revenue in England from the sale of liquor during the fiscal year was nearly six million dollars less than for the previous year, and within the past ten years the receipts of the government from this source have decreased $22,500,000. Right straight along for forty years, with the decline of working hours, has gone the decline of liquor. We have had the same exeperience in our own country. The industrials that work the least hours have the least drunkenness.' Ladies and Gentlemen, I cannot help but repeat again and again,

no one must be idle and indifferent in the solving of the great problems, for it is the duty of every humanitarian and lover of his kind to examine the vital questions from every point of view, and thereby become enabled to apply the most efficient remedies. One of the great demands in this new century is to organize industry on a scientific plane, and shorten the hours of labor. Then will the world witness for the first time the elevation of the human race, through the natural, mental and moral growth, and then everyone will have the best chance to obtain the knowledge of Divine Truth, and then, 'The truth will make everyone free!' Overwork and poverty prevent people from meditating, from reading, and from studying. 'The book,' said Victor Hugo, 'is the light! The light is in the book. Let it cast forth its beams. You take care of your cities, you want to be safe in your homes, you are afraid of leaving the streets in darkness; think of the danger which is greater, the danger of leaving the human mind in darkness.' He further says: 'Industry seeks the useful, philosophy seeks the truth, the right kind of literature seeks the beautiful. Usefulness, truth and beauty, that should be the triple aim of all human efforts, and the triumph of these sublime efforts will be the high civilization and peace among mankind!'" Great applause. "Yes, literature, art, music, poetry, will arouse the people, and they will become convinced that they possess the power to break the shackles which bind them to a life of slavery. Do you remember what the good president, Abraham Lincoln, once said, that 'pictures were the best recruiting sergeants'? You undoubtedly know how many political frauds and corruptions were exposed by cartoons, and public opinion so influenced that the combinations were broken up? The power of pictorial art consists in appealing deeply and creating ideas in the human soul. You certainly have heard how an audience is deeply impressed when they witness the reproduction of a drama, aided with moving pictures; how there is something fascinating and extraordinary; how it makes the conception more ethereal, realistic and vivid? The Reconstructive Movement is growing wonderfully. The people's attention is drawn, and they are converted by the ceaseless use it makes of the reforming means of art, literature, music, song and poetry. You, no doubt, know how Cola da Reinzi, the famous Roman, when marching through Rome,would confine his sight upon the marbles which represented the ancient greatness and incited him to emulate the illustrious men

to whose memory they were consecrated? The reading of Livio of Seneca, and of Tullio lighted his soul and he would not cease to magnify the impress of the tribunes. In those times of disorder, vices and extravagance, he would cry out that the officers were not good citizens, for they were sucking the blood of the poor. He knew that to awaken the dormant minds of the people nothing was more efficacious than pictures representing the famous allegories, which caused Rome to be struck with great marveling. Representing and deploring the misery, the slavery of the people, who were filling the country with lamentation and despair, he prepared their minds, and you know how quickly he inflamed their souls, which brought into manifestation the needed activity which destroyed the tyranny and arrogance of the autocrats and enemies of the popular good. That good man had healed Rome of a great many moral infirmities, but, as history informs us, his wife was so worldly and filled with vanity that it is no wonder he lost sight of the right track, and, following her example, he decorated his person with magnificent ornaments in order to seduce the minds of the great multitudes, and once having been an ardent sustainer of the rights of the people, you know how morally low he fell! Of course, we know that in that dark age women no more than men had a chance to rightly understand what life really was, but today, in this advanced age, mankind will be more guilty than ever if it allows the broadcast powers of evil to exist. In this advanced age women must not imitate and follow the example of the women of the past. They must arise from the lower into a higher moral realm, then we shall no longer hear that a number of American women have taken possession of precious stones, of jewelry, valued at twenty-two millions and two hundred and fifty thousand dollars. Think of women wearing at ordinary receptions, jewels worth $750,000; others wearing at mere garden parties, jewels worth $50,000. Are they not the ones who encourage the modern capitalists to spread the powers of evil, instead of preventing them? Are they not to blame, when we see the other extreme, the women of the producers of wealth living a long life of slavery, whose work is never done; what rest and what prospect have they? Can we not yet perceive the great social changes that this advanced age calls for? Are not the women of the wealthy class to blame when we hear, 'take a walk and look at the homes of the rich. They give the impression of sepulchres, the graves of

lost souls. The children are the fellow victims of the parents in these conditions; they have too little parent love and too many toys, and too many servants.' Women must fully understand that the empty worldly pleasures deprive life of the true and permanent happiness. Oh, how my heart rejoices when I hear the news that women are beginning to perceive this important fact! Recently it was announced that two daughters of one of the wealthiest capitalists in a large city were disgusted, were actually sick on account of the hypocrisy and sham of life among the upper classes. They have joined a reform movement, much to the chagrin of their father and of the smart set. It caused the father to think. He said at an interview with a preacher: 'You should convert the millionaires and take them out of their wretched and selfish lives!' The comment of the paper was that such virtuous spasms do not live long in the atmosphere where men's schemes are to rob their fellow men. Ladies and gentlemen, we hear preachers sometimes condemn the wrong-doings of society. Some of them say that this age is groaning under its weight of sin and suffering. That it is haunted at every turn by the spectre of disease and crime. They deal with the effects, why do they not prevent the cause? Is not this destructive social system the cause of disease and crime? You probably have read what one of them said, 'that modern society is a school in which liars are educated, in which hypocrites and shams find a plentiful field for operation, that modern society is as hollow as a bass drum. Parents,' he said, 'there are no parents in modern society. Father means faithlessness; mother means everything but maternity. The social woman has come to regard the child as a curse. Children are considered the chain which binds the hands and feet of the modern society woman. The home of the modern society woman is the prison in which youths are taught the higher elements of refined crimes! The child learns to lie, to slander, to back-bite, to gamble, to drink, to swear at its mother's breast!' You see, they describe the horrible conditions, but do they help to establish a system that will constantly appeal to the higher, the spiritual, instead of the lower qualities of humanity? Are not the capitalist combinations the ones that create the torrents of corruption and vice, and threaten a repetition of history which has caused the downfall of great nations? 'Our civilization,' said Victor Hugo, 'the work of twenty centuries, is at once a monster and a prodigy. It is worth saving, it will be

saved. The nineteenth century is great, but the twentieth century will be happy. The soul will gravitate around truth as the planet does around the light.' My good friends, fortunately there are a great many indications that the twentieth century women accept the ideas expressed by the author, E. B., that, 'Not only are the toilers of the world engaged in something like a world-wide insurrection, but true and humane men and women of every degree are in a mood of exasperation verging on absolute revolt against social conditions that reduce life to a brutal struggle for existence.' My good countrywomen, I hope that you, as the women of the great reform movement, will feel alarmed instead of complimented in regard to what a writer said, 'That it is not mere opinion, hazarded as a guess, but a result of ten years' study, that American women are gaining over the men, that they will be physically superior, as they are now morally superior, and their mental equals.' Think, my good friends, he states that the cause is the wild craze for wealth, and the reckless excesses they indulge in, is what is causing them to deteriorate so rapidly. The American woman is the hope of the nation, and the pity is, that the American man is not keeping pace with her, and if the present tendencies continue, the American woman will be mentally and physically superior to the American man. As I said, we feel alarmed instead of complimented, for can we expect the improvement of the human race if either men or women deteriorate? Oh, may the men and women awaken! May they all unite and work faithfully under the banner of the Reconstructive Movement! May they all seek for the true wisdom, and no longer dwell in darkness, so they will become conscious of a new and divine love toward all humanity. Then, when this sublime purpose is understood, every one will enlist every form of energy to perform the Divine Mission, to abolish the old wrongs of filling the almshouses with paupers, and the highways with tramps, the cruelty that creates poverty, resulting in crimes of every form, that degrades the highest creation on earth, the human race! May every man and woman do their very best to spread from east to west, from north to south, the saving principles of the Reconstructive Movement, which will save every living being from the terrible precipice toward which, unless we establish the new system, they are inevitably gliding! Very recently a preacher said: 'Do not send your money to missions in foreign lands. You have heathens and pagans

here at home.' Did he explain who are the heathens and pagans? He did not. Think how simple are the ideas when he said that in the mountains of the south are people who don't know the name of the president or the governor of the state. That they don't know, even, who made them. These are heathens, pagans, pure and simple. It is for them we labor. Why do they not admit that it is the present system which keeps people in ignorance and want? The real heathens and pagans are those who will not investigate and adopt the principles of the Reconstructive system, under which there will be no lack of knowledge. Ladies and gentlemen, for your own and your fellow beings' good, you ought to study the great principles. You will find them clearly explained in the reform papers. I will read some to you: 'Under this new system, hatred will be stopped by stopping the fight of competition through industrial co-operation. It will stop the industrial warfare of competition, and have peace and plenty for all. It will stop drunkenness by taking away the need of stimulants, and the incentive of gain to deal in liquor. It will stop dishonesty by taking away the incentive to lie and steal. This great, saving, new system wants everybody to investigate it, because it is true. It wants everybody to know that it means the organization of the industry of the world, so that the workers of the world will be able to produce more and better in less time and with greater ease. It wants the workers of the world to be free. It wants equal opportunity for all who work. It wants the people to own the public press which, privately owned, doctors the news in the interest of the rich, and pollutes the stream of truth. It wants everybody to do the kind of work they are best fitted for. It wants to stop the anarchy of greed at the top, and the anarchy of poverty at the bottom. It wants justice, not charity. It wants to stop hatred by stopping the fight of competition through industrial co-operation. It wants those who, by their work, make education possible, to have opportunity for educating themselves. It wants those who, by their work, make music and theatres and travel possible, to have those good things. It wants pensions for all workers who advance in age or become disabled. It wants the sun to shine for all!'" Great applause. "Oh my good friends, it will appear as one of the greatest wonders, for mankind will be mentally changed. There will be no antagonisms, there will be no apprehension and worry, for every condition will be morally, physically and spiritually

improved. We will all learn how, under that new system, the common interests of all the people, as the reform press teaches, will make war and bloodshed abominable and impossible! People will not have to work for money, but first for the necessities of life, and then for what will add to their comfort and refinement. Any person with exceptional brain power will use his or her talent for the betterment of the race rather than for the ignoble purpose of selfish gain. The earth and the fullness thereof will belong to the human race, and not to the strong, who, by their strength, throw the burdens upon the weak. The necessities of life being provided for, by the willing work of all, there will be opportunity for general education and culture such as the world nas never seen. The flag of freedom will float over the entire civilized earth, not as an emblem of authority, but as the emblem of justice and good will among all men." Great applause. "The recreation, the education and the spiritual development of all the people will be looked after with the greatest care. As this great reform paper says, it will cost no more to maintain cripples and unfortunates in comfort than it does now to prolong their existence in poor-houses, for there will be no profit paid for their care. The waste of commercial advertising, fence building, maintenance of navies, and many other useless things will be dispensed with, and the people then so employed will work at something constructive."

At this point the lady speaker paused. A number of persons in the audience had risen from their seats. The expression of the countenances and their lively gestures attracted everyone's attention. The hall became filled with the sounds.

"Lady Speaker, allow me to ask, isn't that Socialism? Will not those great principles be obtained through the heroic energy and devotion of the Socialist workers?"

The sight of the speaker's calmness, the sweet expression of her smiling face, softened the stir of the generous emotions in the listeners' hearts. Begging her pardon they again took their seats.

"Yes," impressively replied the speaker. "It is the great philosophy of 'Socialism,' which will rapidly supply the world with the extremely needed moral, physical and spiritual remedies! You are right. It is 'Socialism' which will establish the real Kingdom of Righteousness and Justice on earth! I beg you, Oh, you who are true Socialists, remember the true statement made by the advanced

American woman reformer, Elizabeth Cady Stanton, 'That the deadliest enemy to our republic is the aristocracy of our women!' Let us all try our best to convert the women, the twentieth century women! Socialism has the supreme mission to reconstruct the great social body, and only by constantly spreading its saving ideals will the statement made in the reform press be verified, 'The crisis of centuries is at hand, and Socialism holds the key to the world's deliverance!'"

THE END.

LB Ag '12

THE TWENTIETH CENTURY WOMAN.

BY
Mrs. Matilde J. Berra.
Los Angeles
California
1376, Cor 20th and
Willard Ave.

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS
00022271659